COMMENTARY

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COMMENTARY

WHAT CAN WE DO ABOUT FAGIN?

The Jew-Villain in Western Tradition

LESLIE A. FIEDLER

"SINCE the Diaspora, and the scattering of the Jews amongst peoples holding the Christian Faith," T. S. Eliot writes in an incidental footnote in *Towards a Definition of Culture*, "it may have been unfortunate both for these peoples and for the Jews themselves, that the culture-contact between them has had to be within those neutral zones of culture in which religion could be ignored. . . ." "Culture-contact" is a broad concept, and Mr. Eliot is doubtless thinking of all post-exilic relations between Christians and Jews, from the mutually falsifying intercourse of the marketplace, through the popular theater, to the worlds of scholarship and high art. The conditions of this contact may seem to a pious man like Mr. Eliot "unfortunate," but without secularization on both sides, without the common pretense that there is a non-religious culture, there would have been no contact at all. For better or worse, there would have been no possibility of achieving that rich alienated art we think of as particularly our own—and Mr. Eliot's: bounded on one side by Joyce and John Dewey, D. H. Lawrence and Picasso; and on the other by Freud and Marx, Kafka and Chagall; and straddled by hybrids like Proust.

It was not until the time of the Enlightenment that the dream of a "human" culture, available to Jew and Gentile alike, could even be proposed. With the explicit understanding that darkness and superstition (that is to say, the orthodox Jewish and Christian faiths) were to be disowned, the Jewish intellectual emerged from the ghetto to stand beside his Gentile brother, to accept European culture and to modify it. Crying in unison *"Écrasez l'infâme!"* Deist ex-Christian and rationalist ex-Jew embraced over the vision of the Cabalist and Talmudist undone, the Monk and Inquisitor overthrown by universal reason. Sometimes, for the sake of fraternity, the Jew felt obliged to go through the motions of baptism. A

FOR the Jew who feels himself to be a full participant in Western culture, it comes always as a new shock to recognize that this culture continues to harbor a mythical image of him that is both insulting and dangerous. But the problem of what to do about it faces him with a grievous dilemma, most recently posed again by the controversy around the movie version of *Oliver Twist* with its obnoxious Fagin. Picket Dickens and T. S. Eliot, excommunicate Chaucer, censor Shakespeare? LESLIE A. FIEDLER offers here his personal approach to this complex problem. He is assistant professor in English and humanities at Montana State University. Born in Newark, New Jersey, in 1917, he received his BA from New York University and his MA and PhD from the University of Wisconsin. He has contributed criticism, stories, and poetry to *Poetry, New Leader, Partisan Review,* and COMMENTARY.

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mere formality—instead of staying away from *shul* on Saturday, the old joke runs, he would fail to go to church on Sunday; a small price for admission into Western culture!

After some two hundred years, we seem to have fulfilled the dream of the Enlightenment. The key names of recent European culture are almost as likely as not to be Jewish names; in politics, in literature, in painting, everywhere we have arrived; there is even one discipline, perhaps the most influential of our day, called by its enemies "the Jewish Science." But though we speak with a score of tongues, we are still—"we"! There is still a "they" to define us; and when a Hitler arises, it is easy to spot "our" artists, to excise them by decree from a national culture—even those supplied with the passport of a baptismal certificate. Religion has unexpectedly refused to wither away; St. Paul and the Cabala are re-read, redeemed. A neo-Christian revival draws off in one direction; a neo-Hasidic awakening tugs in another. The reign of the Goddess of Reason was short.

The dream of a pan-human culture remains a dream, one dreamed long ago and harder each day to remember. We are not even sure that, after all, it may not have been a nightmare. Indeed, M. Sartre tells us that we Jews cling to the liberal dream of a single humanity only "inauthentically," as bad Jews trying to escape our meaning and freedom. For quite different reasons, Martin Buber agrees with him; and a score of voices cry "Amen!"—not only to be fashionable, but in real perplexity and need.

There is everywhere the sense of a crisis in our liaison with the West. Mr. Eliot begins to question the "excessive tolerance" which permitted the experiment in the first place; and he warns us that in his ideal Christian commonwealth no large number of "free-thinking" Jews will be allowed. But we were invited in, we remember, precisely on the terms of being "free-thinkers"; we sang the "Marseillaise" as loud as any of them; and we were assured that the Christian myth which excluded us was dying, fading to the status of an old wives' tale. Without warning they've changed the rules on us!

We remind Mr. Eliot (most lately David Daiches has been doing it, gently enough) that it was the "free-thinking Jews" who printed him, touted him, loved him in his *Waste Land* days before the official recognition of Nobel committees and state awards; who helped develop the climate of sensibility in which his work flourished. The more philistine among us are driven to cry hysterically, "Boycott the anti-Semite! Don't read the reactionary swine!" But the Jewish intellectual of my generation cannot disown him without disowning an integral part of himself. He has been a profounder influence on a good many of us than the Baal Shem Tov or the author of Job. We are not yet willing to resign from Western culture; and, speaking English, we cannot afford to abjure the *miglior fabbro* of our tongue in the 20th century, the voice which has made in our own rhythm and idiom elegant patterns of our arid despair and quiet oases of hope.

Made sensitive by Hitler and the collapse of the universalist dream, we re-examine our literary heritage as Jewish writers and readers of English—and we wince! Looking again at Lawrence or Pound, Shakespeare, Chaucer, Marlowe, Pope, Wordsworth, Scott or Dickens, T. S. Eliot, Charles Williams or Graham Greene, everywhere we come upon a myth of the Jew, central to our whole culture, before which as Jews we are embarrassed, dumb. Assured we are legitimate heirs, we enter into our supposed inheritance, only to find we are specifically excluded.

What is the name of the excluding image, half-comic, half-hideous, with red wig and grotesque false nose, who meets us, bloody knife in hand, to call us *chaver*, fellow-Jew? Shylock, Fagin, Isaac, Barrabas, Ahasuerus, Cartaphilus, Colleoni—his momentary labels do not matter; he is the Usurer, the Jew with the Knife, the Jew as Beast. A compulsive image, he haunts the English imagination; a creature of fear and guilt, he exists before

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and beneath written literature, an archetype inhabiting the collective unconscious of the English-speaking peoples. Like most of the archetypal figures of our culture, he has been most absolutely realized by Shakespeare, but he is present everywhere in our art. If we come to our literature disregarding his existence, or taking each of his appearances as accidental, disconnected, we will be the more deceived; and will end picketing this moving-picture theater, cutting out that page, boycotting this novel, deprecating that author; or else learn endlessly to encounter the manifold faces of the myth, pretending to be unaware, while the heart leaps with bitterness and terror. Let us at least know clearly that, if we want to call the culture in which we live our own, we will have to come to terms with a believed-in monster, a symbol of darkness whose name we share. The simple knowledge is not enough, but it is the only way to begin.

The real start of the myth of the Jew with the Knife in English literature goes back to the tale, already hundreds of years old, which Chaucer puts into the mouth of his Prioress, a character faintly ridiculous, but lovable and obviously intended to be esteemed. It is a charmingly told tale about a little boy who so irked the Jews by singing the praises of the Virgin, that their community hired a murderer, who cut the child's throat (another version has his heart and tongue cut out) and tossed him into a jakes "wher as the Iewes purgen her entraile." Needless to say, the crime is revealed by a miracle and the Jews cruelly punished; but the important point is that the crime at the heart of the story is one of mutilation with a knife—and that in the early part of the poem, the conventional identification of the Jews with usury is pointedly made. The pattern is already set.

It was the report of an atrocity (the alleged crucifixion of Hugh of Lincoln) which probably moved Chaucer to set down the "Prioress's Tale"; three hundred and fifty years later, another outburst of lynch hysteria over the case of Lopez, court physician to Queen Elizabeth, and a Jew, created the audience demand to which Marlowe's *Jew of Malta*, Gosson's lost play *The Jew*, and Shakespeare's *Merchant of Venice* all responded. The concept of the Machiavel, the stock Elizabethan villain who elevated a kind of onanistic malevolence into a grand passion, lay ready to hand, and was combined with the more primitive notion of the Slasher who thought God's Mother a whore.

Marlowe's *Jew* is known now to a limited audience only, and Gosson's is no more than a casual reference in a forgotten diary; but Shylock is familiar, at least as a name and vague terror, to almost everyone. Shakespeare's Jew has become pre-eminently a usurer, crafty and merciless, but something more, a representative of the tribal fury of Jewry that will not admit its maltreatment is merited. He loves only one thing more than gold: the sweet savor of vengeance. In the old story of the bond and the pound of flesh, Shakespeare hit upon a fable of extraordinary aptness. It is at once a gross but not pointless caricature of the legalism of the Talmudic mind, and a parable, from the Christian point of view, of the Jews' stubborn invocation of that greater Covenant whose literal meaning seems to be their salvation, the Gentiles' exclusion, but in the end proves to mean just the opposite. It preserves, too, the essential image of the bared blade—and makes clear at just what it is aimed.

WHAT, then, *is* the threat the Christian uneasily dreams? Why is the mythic weapon of the Jew a knife? Antonio is asked to strip; a pound of flesh is to be cut, the original terms stipulated, from anywhere on his body; there is the understanding that such an excision will prevent the consummation of a marriage; in the background, we are aware of the extended meaning of the Bond, the Covenant. It is, of course, *circumcision* with which the *boy* feels himself menaced, a vicious circumcision that blurs in his guilt-ridden, scared mind into castration. In Shakespeare's actual text, the place from which the flesh is to be cut is finally an area "nearest to the heart," but is not this

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an obvious displacement, like Chaucer's throat or the tongue and heart of the analogues?

The sense of a threat greater than that explicitly stated, a threat to sexuality, is really there, in the play; and, it seems to me, even the standard atrocity attributed to the Jew, the ritual murder of a child, is a rationalization of that original nightmare of the circumcisor, ritual blade in hand. The Jew as slasher never dies from the imagination; his latest avatar (via the Fagin of Dickens) is Colleoni, the gangster with the razor blade in Graham Greene's *Brighton Rock;* while the other aspect of Shylock, the Jew as usurer, flourishes in many places in that author's highly mythic works: for instance, the financier in *This Gun for Hire,* or Myatt in *Orient Express,* who struggles briefly against his fate, but whom we see, at last, wondering as he betrays all human feeling and decency "whether Mr. Stein had the contract in his pocket."

For Ezra Pound, of course, Shylock has become a master image of his paranoia, hallucinatory, compulsive, the usurer as enemy of the world, the Yid as the essential evil of all social life. The memory of Shylock's scriptural instance, Jacob and the flocks of Laban, the accent of the Jew, the shadow of his monstrous nose afflict him, haunt his verse. In the earlier poetry of Eliot the same mythic presence is there, in "Gerontion," for instance, as the illegitimate dispossessor of the *goy* fallen on evil days. Even in D. H. Lawrence, he appears fitfully, "Mr. Nosey Hebrew," like Ben Franklin an enemy of love.

In *The Merchant of Venice,* Shakespeare has added a counter-theme, another level of significance to complicate the fable: the Jew's stolen daughter. Jessica has had many descendants—among them, Rebecca in *Ivanhoe,* Ruth in Melville's *Clarel*—for she is as truly mythic as her father. A trivial, sensual, faithless girl regarded out of the legend, in its context she becomes a symbolic figure of rich meaning. The Christian world has never been quite able to forget that the mother of its redeemer was a Jewess; and the Jessica-Shylock relationship provides a fictional pattern in which the Christian mind can realize its view of the "good" Jewish qualities: a feminine warmth and responsiveness and a capacity of devotion, enthralled to avarice and cold pharisaism.

Since the Virgin is a daughter of Israel, the Christian world vaguely feels Israel as a symbolic father-in-law, a cruel and unwilling parent to whom disobedience is a virtue. In this extension of the myth the castrator becomes fused with a kind of unsavory *pater imago,* the wicked father, from whom one can steal his treasure and his beloved without a qualm. But the stolen Jessica is the daughter of a widower, image and substitute for a dead wife, as well as a symbol of the divine mother—and she brings into the situation bizarre hints of an Oedipus conflict. To be sure, Shakespeare splits the complex, associating the castration theme with Antonio, and the rape of the old man's beloved with Lorenzo. It is a comedy after all, and the darker implications must be muted, concealed—to leave them laughing in the pit.

THE conclusion of the mythic pattern must be the humiliation and downfall of the Jew (his forcible conversion in comedy, his death by torture in tragedy); and to keep the contradiction between his vindictive end and the Christian obligation to mercy from becoming too blatant, the myth habitually involves a de-humanization of the Jew, his portrayal as more beast than man. Even in Chaucer, there is some animal imagery, the Snake entering the hearts of the Jews, those hearts compared to nests of wasps. In Shakespeare, however, the method is carried much further; by the end of the play, Shylock is not merely compared to but *is* a dog, a wolf. (In one of Shakespeare's sources the main image is, ironically enough, that of a hog, and the sow is used to represent the Jew in anti-Semitic caricatures of many countries down through Hitler's day.)

O be thou damned, inexcrable dogge. . . .
Thou almost mak'st me waver in my faith;
To hold the opinion with Pythagoras,

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That souls of Animals infuse themselves
Into the trunks of men. Thy currish spirit
Governed a Wolfe. . . .
And whil'st thou layest in thy unhallowed dam
Infused itself in thee. . . .

In Pope's *Moral Essays* the toad, more horrible for not being specifically named, is substituted for the dog, which had risen in social esteem between Shakespeare's time and that age of lap-dogs.

And every child hates Shylock, though his soul
Still sits at squat, and peers not from its hole.

The suggestion is picked up and re-echoed in T. S. Eliot's

My house is a decayed house,
And the jew squats on the window sill, the owner,
Spawned in some estaminet of Antwerp. . . .

Indeed, it is Eliot's typical method, and almost compulsive approach, to mention the Jew always in a low animal context, toad, rat, or the unnamed vulturine creature of "Sweeney Among the Nightingales."

The rats are underneath the piles.
The jew is underneath the lot. . . .

Rachel née Rabinovich
Tears at the grapes with murderous paws. . . .

There is really no overt, no active anti-Semitism in this; Mr. Eliot is shocked when the charge is made against him, raises a surprised and gentle demurrer. It is true, after all, that consciously he opposes anti-Semitism as a heresy, proposes neither the gas chamber nor the pogrom; but on the unconscious level, the Jew is to him an object of horror, a symbol of illegitimate dispossession, of bestiality. Similarly, Graham Greene, who writes publicly against the persecution of the Jews, peoples his works with Jews unfailingly sinister: creatures lost to the spirit, devoted only to things; betrayed, despite their smiles and false Anglo-Saxon names, by the undeniable nose of Shylock.

It is inevitable that Shylock take on new life and vigor in any literature which turns back to the traditional sources of myth, whether the impulse is neo-Christian as in the cases of Eliot and Greene, or pagan and aesthetic as in the case of Pound. In most respectable modern literature, the myth is no longer associated with the lynch spirit out of which Chaucer's Jew and Shakespeare's arose; it reflects an irrepressible vestigial shudder rather than the lust for a pogrom. There is an apt passage in Hazlitt's essay "On the Pleasure of Hating": "A child, a woman, a clown, or a moralist a century ago, would have crushed the little reptile to death: my philosophy has got beyond that. I bear the creature no ill will, but still I hate the very sight of it. The spirit of malevolence survives the practical exertion of it. We learn to curb our will and keep our overt actions within the bounds of humanity, long before we can subdue our sentiments and imaginations to the same mild tone. We give up the external demonstration, the *brute* violence, but cannot part with the essence or principle of hostility. We do not tread upon the poor animal in question (that seems barbarous and pitiful!) but we regard it with a sort of mystic horror and superstitious loathing. It will ask another hundred years of fine writing and hard thinking to cure us of the prejudice, and make us feel toward this ill-omened tribe with something of 'the milk of human kindness,' instead of their own shyness of venom."

These lines were written of—*spiders!* It is distressing to think that with scarcely a change they can be read as referring to Jews; though the Jews, alas, are thinking spiders, vermin that walk like men. Before the Enlightenment, our "ill-omened tribe" lived in a world as remote from the world of Western culture as any insect society. If we were not stepped on, we did not suffer; but now we are moved by the dimmest internal shudder, as it is recorded in art. We print it, buy it, read it—and are hurt by it. Whatever a hun-

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dred years of "fine writing and hard thinking" has done for the spider, it has brought us—Hitler.

The principle of hostility that seemed to Hazlitt forever severed from brute violence seems more ambiguous to us in the light of Dachau. Where do we, then, as reasoning reptiles, go from here? What response can we make to a culture in which so terrible and perilous a myth of ourselves is inextricably involved?

WE COULD withdraw from the whole problem, pull back into some spiritual ghetto, where only sticks and stones might break our bones. . . . Perhaps it has been a mistake, and it is time after two hundred years to admit that Western culture is basically hostile to us as Jews. There are several spiritual ghettos for sale at a reasonable price: the Hebrew pastoralism of modern Israel; the return via Hasidism or Talmudism to a closed Orthodox community; even the possibility of accepting Eastern European totalitarianism as a *pis aller*. After all, the rather desperate apology goes, at least there is no anti-Semitism there! Not a few Jews these days, otherwise quite unsympathetic to Stalinism, turn in despair to an avowedly anti-Christian culture, with a sense that Hitler was what our Western world had been all the time meaning. For those of us who choose to remain where we are such solutions are palpably impossible; and for any of us, in the Galut or in Israel, there is simply too much to lose, values which have become as essential to us as air, areas of experience without which our lives would seem hopelessly meager. Besides, we have given too many hostages to the West; pulling out, we would have to leave behind our Montaignes and Spinozas, our Prousts and Freuds, our Einsteins and Kafkas, our Blochs and Soutines.

Another strategy is simply to accept the validity of the myth, and dissociate ourselves from it. This is a more complex matter than mere assimilation, although it sometimes begins with that process. Karl Marx and Heine are two classic examples of that strategy in action: they accepted the Shylock symbol as true, and in their mouths "Jew!" was an epithet to be flung in anger and derision at those with whom they disagreed; it had nothing to do with them, but belonged to a dark and malevolent world they were bent on destroying. Even they, however, were able to stay inside such a solution only intermittently; and for us all hope of such an easy out is lost. For, since Houston Chamberlain, "Jew" has not meant an adherent to a particular faith, or a follower of a certain way of life, but anyone connected by blood, however remotely, to such adherents or followers.

So racism has stymied the strategy of escape' by dissociation; although a variant of it flurishes in certain Zionist quarters, where Shylock is accepted as a symbol of the corruption of the Jew in Exile, the black disease from which we are to be cured by contact with the Land, the nightmare from which we shall be wakened by the guns of the Haganah. This bias, setting Hebrew against Jew and splitting our people, can be no final solution.

A third approach is what might be called kidnapping the myth, that is, reinterpreting it, reading into it, as it is fixed in traditional story, new, more sympathetic meanings. During the Romantic period, precisely such an appropriation was successfully made of the Wandering-Jew-Magus (a late-comer in English literature and not nearly so important as the Shylock *imago*). The figure of Cartaphilus or Ahasuerus, who was told by Jesus to tarry until his second coming for having struck him on the road to Calvary, had been originally accepted as a symbol of the eternal exile, the unremitting exclusion of the stiff-necked Jew; and an additional aura of horror became attached to the figure when it was identified with the concept of the Jew as Black Magician. By the time of Shelley, however, Ahasuerus had been transformed into an archetype of the Rebel, the Promethean or Byronic villain-hero with burning eyes, who had mutinied against God himself for the sake of mankind.

It was only a momentary victory. The collapse of the vogue of the Satanic hero has

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brought the wheel full circle; Cartaphilus and Manfred alike seem to us these days childish in their viciousness; and in Charles Williams' *All Hallows Eve,* the Wandering Jew has returned in all his old terror, as Simon the Clerk, the dark magician and the instrument of annihilation.

THERE has always been the feeling that *The Merchant of Venice* is the key to the degraded picture of the Jew. If only this could be redeemed! It has for nearly a hundred years been strategically misinterpreted, argued with; quite recently the whole story has even been rewritten from the Jewish point of view. But the main attack has been launched on the stage. Since the mid-19th century a tradition of acting Shylock as a tragic and suffering victim has grown up to replace the original concept of the burlesqued villain, the "oi! oi! oi!" interpretation which rolled them in the aisles at the Globe.

Heine writes in 1856 of having seen such a modernizing performance at Drury Lane, at which a "pale, fair Briton" was moved to weep and cry out, "The poor man is wronged!"; but there is an underlying menace in the play which cannot be sentimentalized out of existence. Writing at almost the very same time, another German critic returns from a performance full of anti-Semitic fire to jot down the terrible words of Luther, which he felt confirmed by Shylock: "Know, then, dear Christian, that, next to the Devil, thou canst have no bitterer, fiercer foe than a genuine Jew, one who is Jew in earnest. The true counsel I give thee, is that fire be put to their synagogues, and that, over what will not burn up, the earth be heaped and piled, so that no stone or trace of them be seen for evermore."

The appropriation of the myth is a chancy thing at best, depending upon a subjective emphasis, against which the traditional fable forever contends. Wherever *The Merchant of Venice* is played, there is a risk of the old abysmal terror stirring to life in the beholder, for that terror is more ancient than any "humane" interpretation, older than the play that is merely one of its outward forms.

Most recently there has been an attempt from many Jewish quarters to *expurgate* Western culture of whatever smacks of anti-Semitism, to introduce what has been called a censorship of sensitivity: pickets have marched before a movie version of *Oliver Twist;* the "Prioress's Tale" has been left out of a new modern-English Chaucer; proposals have been made to take *Ivanhoe* and *The Merchant of Venice* from required reading lists in the schools; Eliot and Pound have been blasted in the Jewish press. There is something disturbing in all this, an impulse on the one hand extraordinarily naive, and on the other, hysterical to the point of being dangerous.

The naivety lies in a failure to realize how deep and essential is the complex at which we take random blows here and there. Perhaps it is a defensive naivety, willingly clung to; we hesitate to face the total problem, *want* to believe we are dealing with a matter whose solution will require no more than the excision of a few pages from a handful of books.

Let us examine, for a moment, the problem of Chaucer's "Prioress's Tale," now excluded from one translation of the *Canterbury Tales.* Will we ask as a next step its expurgation from *all* renderings in modern English? What, then, about the original Middle English text, not so difficult to read after all? After we have made that kosher, we shall just have begun: there will have to be a page torn from every edition of the complete works of Wordsworth, for that poet published in 1820 his own verse translation of Chaucer's story; Percy's *Reliques* will have to be examined and the ballad of Hugh of Lincoln removed; all accounts in Latin and English of the score of children canonized after alleged mutilation and murder by Jews will have to be burned. And what will have been accomplished even at that point beyond removing the outward and visible manifestations of the dream-shape that has haunted the West for two thousand years: the Jew with the Knife, circumcisor, castrator, ritual murderer? The myth may eventually die, but it cannot be killed.

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MEANWHILE, we will have unleashed in our vain attempt a perilous hysteria that will be hard to keep in reasonable bounds, and which will be met by counter-hysterias. In view of history, the Jew as censor, invoking inquisition and the index on his own behalf against the printed word, cannot help but seem an absurdity, even to himself. The burning of books is a terrible recourse, to which we should not turn except in final desperation. (I do not contend, as has John Haynes Holmes in a recent article, that there is nothing extraordinary in our situation except our sensitivity; that the mythic Jew is no different in kind from the stage Irishman, the stingy Scotsman, the lecherous Parisian. It is impossible to forget that men have died of our myth.)

It is ridiculous to attempt to censor a whole culture, even of what we know is a palpable and terrible evil. As we permit to art, for the sake of values real though difficult to define, blasphemy, scurrility, the advocacy of suicide and adultery, the glorification of masochism and narcissism, so we must permit it—anti-Semitism. I would myself be unwilling to give up, even in a self-imposed boycott, *The Merchant of Venice* or the poems of Ezra Pound because they contain evil doctrine; beside the corruption, there is beauty and a degree of true vision that we cannot afford to sacrifice.

We must translate for ourselves, as we read, passionate avarice, nihilism, and the desire to mutilate, into terms more universal than the mythic bestial Jew; the archetypal image that realizes these black qualities is, in one sense, no lie; we know such impulses exist, even in us, though not of course as we are Jews, but as we are men. Yet we will not be able to keep from wincing at the specific identification of moral darkness with our name until the Gentile has learned to wince at having made the identification in the first place. We cannot come to that realization for him; the Gentile must learn for himself that Shylock is the creature of *his* fantasy and fear; *his* stratagem to transfer the evil that haunts us all on to an alien, an Other. Already there are signs in some quarters of such a realization; but a myth dies slowly at best—and in a world of increasing terror is artificially revived. It will not be tomorrow that we will be able to watch without a qualm the curtain go up on *The Merchant of Venice.* If the Christian world seems to move in this regard at a glacial rate, let us realize the terrible burden of guilt that awaits it upon the final recognition; and we can perhaps find in ourselves a kind of pity to balance our impatience and dismay.

In the meanwhile, we can begin to build rival myths of our meaning for the Western world, other images of the Jew to dispossess the ancient images of terror. Several, of varying dignity and depth, are already in existence: the happy Hebrew peasant of the new Israel; the alienated Jew as artist (Kafka's K.) or dilettante (Proust's Swann) or citizen (Joyce's Bloom); the sensitive young victim of the recent crop of American war novels; the ambiguous figure of Saul Bellow's novel, both victim and oppressor. In all the countries of the West, and pre-eminently in America, we have been passing in the last three or four generations from the periphery to the center of culture; more and more, the myths of the Jew will be the handiwork of Jews or of Gentiles whose sensibilities have been profoundly conditioned by ours.

Indeed, in this apocalyptic period of atomization and uprooting, of a catholic terror and a universal alienation, the image of the Jew tends to become the image of everyone; and we are perhaps approaching the day when the Jew will come to seem the central symbol, the essential myth of the whole Western world.

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DEPARTURE AND ARRIVAL

Two First-Hand Reports

Embarkation to Israel

ROBERT AND MARTHA LEVIN

FOR two months my wife and I had been bicycling through France, cut off from the world. At La Ciotat, some twenty miles east of Marseille, we had settled ourselves for a while—bicycles and bags—in the local *auberge de la jeunesse,* a youth hostel so new that it was not yet finished.

In the midst of an impassioned argument, in which we two Americans, two English boys, and a Dutch hosteler were pitted against a lone English vegetarian who had been pushed so far out on the limb that he was vehemently denouncing vivisection, one of the youth-hostel parents entered. The *père l'aube,* as he is called by even the non-French-speaking hostelers, was a young fellow who worked in La Ciotat's shipyard.

AFTER saying good evening and excusing himself for having broken into the conversation, he surprised everyone by making no effort to join in. Instead he went straight to Martha and me and took us aside.

"There is something you must see tonight," he said. "Go down to the port a little later, and you will see them go aboard, *les misérables, les malheureux.* You will never forget it. I have seen it many times myself, these departures of the Jews."

It is, perhaps, not odd and perhaps it is not shameful, but the truth is that the word alone, whether it be "Jew" or *"juif,"* turns me in on myself as though I were suddenly in a room of mirrors—floor and ceiling and all four sides—and I have a moment of panic in which I am afraid that some of those mirrors, taken from Coney Island's House of Fun, will distort me into something monstrous and inhuman. So it was that when he spoke of an event that encompasses misery on a gigantic scale, my first thought nevertheless was of myself, my first words, of self-defense.

"You know of course that we are Jewish."

"No," he said, looking straight at me, "but you're a writer and this is something a writer should see for himself. It is easy to do. They will not start until it's completely dark. Then it will go on until one, two, even three in the morning. If you come with me now, I'll show you where it is."

We went up one flight and into the girls' dormitory, which was dark and empty, and there in silence we joined the *père l'aube's* wife and a young Indo-Chinese girl, who stood at the window gazing down at the town and the port of La Ciotat stretched out below at the foot of the hill on which the *auberge* stood. In the warm still September air, the sounds of the shipyard nightshift—the clang of metal and hiss of steam, with now and then a whistle of warning from the donkey-engine that chuffed through the yard carrying coal or steel—floated up to us and made the night seem alive. Even the lights along the streets and the window lamps of a hundred homes seemed to throb with a pulse of their own.

The *père l'aube* pointed off to the right. "The trucks are waiting."

For a moment I saw nothing but La

THE mass movement of Jews from Europe and their ingathering in Israel goes forward month by month. In these two pieces of personal reportage we are given vivid glimpses of the sight and feel of this extraordinary moment in Jewish history, together with some sense of the emotions it stirs in the hearts of the "diaspora" beholder—who is also part of the story. The first account, a report on a typical embarkation from Europe, was written by ROBERT and MARTHA LEVIN, though it is told as through the eyes of Robert. Mr. Levin, a graduate of City College, has published in the *New Mexico Quarterly* and *Collier's.* Mrs. Levin is a graduate of Hunter College and has taught English in the New York City high schools. JULIETTE PARY, who describes the scene in Israel, in the report that follows, is a French journalist who, after a long stay in Israel, has just returned to Paris. Her article has been translated from the French by Ralph Manheim.

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Ciotat's confusion of lights. Then I made out four tiny red dots buried in a corner of the night, and it was as though my heart had been struck a stunning blow, so hard did I find it to breathe, for memories had rushed upon me with an impact I could not sustain. This was to happen many times more in the course of that night, but here it was both simple and sudden: six precisely spaced tail-lights seen at a distance. There were, perhaps, ten or twenty times six such lights, but otherwise it was no different in the army. And this sameness of things as they were and as they had been was enough to give me a depth of vision and a feeling of identity that should be easily understood by any ex-soldier who has ever remained standing in a crowded semi-trailer, waiting for a convoy to move or an embarkation to begin.

It is true that these were Jews fleeing Europe and Africa, and most of them were with what remained of their families, or else they were the very old who wanted to die in peace, or the very young, the orphans, who simply wanted to live; but they too had been waiting in camps and had finally been crowded onto trucks and had rolled in darkness to a port they didn't know, and they too must have realized that they were where they were because the world they lived in was sick and festering.

MARTHA and I dressed quickly and went down into La Ciotat. With us came Thihai, the twenty-year-old Indo-Chinese girl, frail, soft-voiced, soft-eyed, who spoke of the tragedy of the Jews in tones so low they seemed numb with horror. She was innocent, so that for her there could be no explanation except in terms of men who were evil, and this was an evilness she could not comprehend. The concentration camps were one thing, products of Nazi viciousness; but now the war was over and with it went the concentration camps and the Nazis and, it would seem, the viciousness. How then explain this flight from native lands? Who were the evil men, and why were they so evil? She asked me this but I had no answer. I do not know who has.

When we reached the main street, which runs along the boat basin, we stopped and glanced around indecisively, for the perspective from the heights had been one thing and this, particularly at night, was quite another. To the left loomed the delicately arched prow of the passenger liner that the Ciotat *chantier* had almost completed, and beyond it lay the port cove and all the small fishing boats on the dark water, lazily rubbing against their piers. But the ship's lights, which had been pointed out to us, had vanished.

Two men and a woman stood under the street lamp across the way and watched us. When our uncertainty became clear to them, one man called out: "Are you looking for something?"

We hesitated. We were not sure whether or not the sailing was a secret, whether the law was being evaded, or even whether we had the right to be there at all, so we tried to fence in reply. Yes, we were looking for something we had been told to see. We were Americans, our friend was Indo-Chinese.

The three of them looked at us even more carefully and then one of them in a leather jacket said, "You are Israelites, aren't you?"

Neither then nor later did he speak of Jews. Israelites and Palestinians, and that was all.

When we said yes, he stretched out his hand and said, *"Sholom aleichem."*

We shook hands with the three of them, and when I repeated the greeting, it was for the first time in my life.

Then he asked, "Are you going?"

Even as I said no, I experienced an instant of regret that almost amounted to shame, as though I had let him down, and I explained that it was purely by chance that we were in La Ciotat that night, and a friend had told us of the embarkation. Were they going?

Their story poured out. They had come from Algiers, where they had lived all their lives, because the Arabs were armed and, as they said, "Arabs are the same as Nazis." Killings had become an almost every-day occurrence and terror was in the air. Seeing no hope and no security for themselves anywhere but in Israel, they had sold everything they possessed and fled. They and their children.

As though proof had been called for, one man, a widower, disappeared around the corner and returned carrying a little boy. Securely wrapped in a blanket, the child

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stared at us with grave, unblinking eyes, his full face pale in the sick light of the street lamp, and then he put his head on his father's shoulder, whimpered once, softly, and fell asleep.

"Our two are sleeping back there," the other man said. "It has not been easy with them, these three weeks that we've been waiting here. But that's finished now."

His eyes lit upon three young men crossing the street toward a café. All three wore white shorts and white shirts wide open at the neck, and their legs and arms were heavily muscled.

"Those are Israelis," he said proudly, "our sailors. God bless them!"

That reminded the woman of something and from her pocketbook she took a photograph. "This is my brother," she said. "He too is a sailor!" The snapshot was of a young man in bathing trunks, facing forward and grinning, displaying his massive chest and biceps in the best Charles Atlas tradition.

"Ah," said the father carrying the baby, "there is a man for you!"

A truck came around the bend in the road. It was the type that GI's called a "six-by," and as it went past, the sound of the motor was familiar, a peculiar kind of whine, and the sight was familiar: people crowded in the back, standing up and waving as we waved to them. Then there was another truck. And another. And another. And another. And another.

"Always six," the man explained, and he could not contain his exultation. "Six at a time they come in from the camp near Marseille, where they all have been waiting their turn—and now we see them on their way! What a wonderful sight!"

We told them that we wanted to see the loading but they doubted that we would be given permission by the gendarmes. The embarkation was not illegal, we learned, but it was—well, surreptitious. Sailings took place from La Ciotat, and not Marseille, because the port authorities here had a different attitude, less legal, less demanding. The exact adjective depends on a person's point of view, for it could be said that La Ciotat's inspectors were more sympathetic, realizing that health rules concerning the number of passengers permitted aboard a vessel should be relaxed for urgent voyages of this order, or it could be said that they were more available and were willing to be lenient for certain considerations. Or, possibly with more justice, both could be said simultaneously.

WE DECIDED to try to reach the ship and said good-bye in the hope that we would see them later on their way. Martha and Thihai held hands and followed me down the road, the three of us keeping to the side that was poorly illuminated. Finally we came to a line of trucks parked one behind the other, awaiting orders to move forward. These were the tail lights seen from the hill.

To avoid walking in the middle of the road, we went between the trucks and the wall that skirted the way, and because this passageway was extremely narrow, we came practically face to face with those who turned to look at us. In the shadows there could be little detail: dark figures huddled together, massed anonymity, vibrant with whispers and the slightest of movements, the pallor of an indistinguishable face here and there confronting us in silent question.

It was a question I wanted to respond to but could not. The moment cried out for a sign of unity, if not identity, for a word or gesture of solidarity that would break the barriers between us—the furtive darkness, the sideboards of the truck—and give them the encouragement with which even then my heart was bursting. But I can speak neither German nor Yiddish, so I passed them by in miserable silence.

Beyond the trucks there was still no indication of the direction to be taken. Off to the left, and extending back from the road, was the shipyard administration building, its unshaded windows a bright neon-blue, and behind this, completely enshrouded by the starry moonless night, was a scrap heap, a dumping yard. In the daytime we had seen it: chunks of rusty iron and rotting timber resting on ashes and refuse, with one crude track beaten down by the trucks that came to dump their loads. Even by daylight a driver had to proceed with caution, and it would seem dangerous at night.

Then we saw lantern markers to guide the trucks. We trudged along the way until we passed the first, a single kerosene lamp at the feet of a man who sat on a small ash heap and watched us as we approached.

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In silence we went by and headed for the second marker, and then the third, with never a sound uttered by any of the men. Even with our ineffectual flashlight we kept stumbling over coils of wire and stones as well as the railroad tracks that ran through the yard, but we did not want to ask for directions. When one man did call out to us, we ignored him and hurried on.

Unexpectedly we came upon a cluster of people almost invisible in the darkness, except for the dusty shoes and makeshift sacks lying on the ground in the path of our light. Here was the line-up. And in another moment we found ourselves on a level area of poured concrete. Here, at the edge, was a sheer drop of twenty feet, and from this vantage point we confronted a scene that could have been a stage set, so compactly were its elements arranged.

Directly before us, securely shored up in drydock, was the massive-timbered hull of a ship that must have sailed the Mediterranean in another century but which now, stripped of all superstructure and set permanently in an equally massive cradle, would never serve the sea again—except as a loading platform for other vessels. And just beyond, broadside to the quay, was the American passenger liner, the "Pan York," its floodlights blazing, its decks alive with activity.

Even as we stood there, the order came to start loading. Slowly, while the first group filed forward, we grasped the full picture of this embarkation. It began in the early evening at a camp near Marseille, mounting trucks, riding for more than an hour across a mountain range, stopping in a strange place and waiting, finally descending and clambering in the dark over treacherous ground, along the edge of a stone quay no more than three feet wide with a wall on one side and water on the other, across steel pontoons bolted together to form a floating pier, up a steep-stepped gangway and into a ship with a passenger capacity of perhaps one half the number who were actually to come aboard.

First came a steady stream of children, who were to occupy the best places aboard the ship. Their step was light, although most of them bore heavy knapsacks. Healthy-looking, scrubbed, rosy-cheeked, and well bundled against the dampness of the night, they mounted the stairs quickly, moved easily along the ties of the railroad track, descended the other side and passed the table where they had to show their blue cards in calm and orderly fashion. All the while, fascinated, their eyes were turned upward, drawn by the brightly lighted ship —so large because they were so small—and then, in a matter of minutes, they were below deck. These were the orphans.

No other group was to proceed as efficiently. Then and only then did we fully understand what a trial such a sailing for Israel must necessarily be, for we saw the people who were going aboard. I know that I myself had observed little until that moment. The faces in the truck had been anonymous and the figures waiting on line had been anonymous, and my emotions were, in a sense, anonymous. As a soldier I had many times experienced this kind of activity. I had gone aboard myself and I had put men aboard: trains, trucks, troopships. Because of this, I thought, then, that I knew what these people were enduring, knew the strange mixture of fright and docility that goes with being herded from one place to another like a dumb beast, knew the stabbing ache of a back that can no longer support the burden it cannot put down, knew the need for help and encouragement that everyone else needs and so cannot give. And even for them, who would sing when the ship sailed, I thought I knew the moment when the gag would slip and the strangled accusation would cry out against the unfairness of this destiny.

But then I saw them clearly. There were some so very old they could barely walk and there were the very young who had to be carried. There were fathers and mothers with two children, three, four—and occasionally there were grandparents with them. They came from many countries and spoke many tongues, so that even among themselves communication was often impossible. And to talk of fear and weariness for them is not the same. It must be seen through their eyes, and when it is, even the ground over which they struggled no longer looks the same.

The stairway leading down certainly did not. These were stone steps, and on one side was a wall. On the other was nothing, except rocks twenty feet below. There were

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no lights. More than two thousand people had to descend those stairs, and this included mothers carrying infants in one hand and satchels in the other, exhausted and uncertain of their footing; old men and women who needed sticks to help themselves along and yet literally dragged sacks behind them; children of twelve with baby brothers or sisters clinging to their necks; other youngsters staggering under the weight of knapsacks meant for strong men; and it included the near-blind and the lame and the panic-stricken. A single misstep, a moment's loss of balance would have meant a twenty-foot fall to the rocks below.

The three of us did what we could to help them past this point and, further on, past the narrow ledge of the quay where, with only a few feet between a wall and the sea, people were moving in two directions. We carried children and valises and let the old lean on us. Sometimes it was easy, sometimes not—as when babies, taken from their mother's arms, became frightened and struck out in a frenzy with arms and legs, or when the old people grabbed us so tightly that it became difficult to move at all.

On top of the steps a young Jew from Czechoslovakia, part of the Marseille camp's embarkation personnel, was directing the emigrants and he made the best use of us that he could. Since he spoke little English, he called to us in simple fashion: "Here, Mister," or "Hello, Missus." His nicest compliment consisted of a wonderful smile and: "You hokay." I sometimes wonder what he would have thought of us had we been able to communicate freely and had he learned that we too were Jews but that, except for this chance occurrence, we played no part in this struggle for existence. Would he have been like the Americans who worked aboard the ship and who, once they learned our nationality, communicated their contempt for anyone not doing what they were, by silence or curt answers? Or like the Englishman who asserted that none of this could have been achieved without American dollars and that consequently this was the contribution for an American to make?

My wife has told me since that she has often thought back to that young Jew from Czechoslovakia, to the urgency of his concern over every man, woman, and child who descended those steps, his eagerness to make their burdens lighter, if only for a few minutes, the kind way he spoke to each one. For us, this was the one boat in all our lives; for us, each person who boarded was someone we wanted never to forget, and each moment we stood still was a reproach. That the ship finally sailed seemed, to us, a miracle. But our friend had been through this many times before, as had the rest of the people whose job it was to get this boatload of people, their people, aboard the "Pan York" quickly, safely, and efficiently. To this Puckish-faced Jew from Czechoslovakia, though, they had never become "boatloads"—he was not toughened to their heavy valises, their waiting, their anxiety. This was why Martha remembered him.

Doing what we could to lessen their burdens going down the steps, we soon found that every contraption ever invented to carry belongings, and many that must have been unique to this journey, were in evidence that night. Valises, strong-boxes, duffelbags, valpacks, army footlockers, potato sacks, cardboard containers, paper parcels, harnesses of necessity and ingenuity, and that most efficient of all methods, the *sac-à-dos*. One couple struggled down the steps, each gripping one handle of a tin bathtub, in the bottom of which they had put all their belongings and on top of which slept their baby.

But that was not all. They had been told to take a maximum of ten kilos, a miserable twenty-two pounds with which to remember the old life and start the new, and of course the regulation had been ignored. So it was that they labored along with the most fantastic things, and the most heartrending, the rickety wooden stool and the battered pots and pans, the umbrella, black and bulky, the hat box, the chamber pot. The sight would never have amused any Frenchman who could recall the frenzied flight before the Germans in 1940, *l'exode,* when people carried overshoes and empty bird-cages. And GI's with memories not too short will remember the barracks bags overloaded with orange-juice squeezers, alarm clocks, electric razors, and pillows. Everything considered, that black umbrella with the stout handle might not prove to be foolish, for the sun in Palestine is strong for an old man who has lived in the shadows of ghettos and concentration camps; and surely only an Ameri-

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can would think the chamber pot ridiculous.

THE old people who went aboard were superb, although how most of them made it, I do not know. I remember one old woman who stopped at the top of the steps, looked down at them helplessly, and then, a moment later, took my hand as though it were an answer to a prayer. She held it tightly but, unlike many others, made no effort to cling to it. Instead, like a child determined to walk by itself, she held my hand rigidly away from her and used it for balance rather than support as her foot sought unsurely for each succeeding step. She was terribly excited—her hand told me that—but that same hand and the stiff set of her body spoke of a rigorous self-restraint that her will imposed upon her emotions. Her calm was almost excessive, as was the deliberateness of her pace, the inflexibility of her carriage. She looked at the ground and she took each obstacle as it came along. The ship was miles away from her and every inch of the way was perilous, the pitted earth, a sudden rise, the mere foot separating shore and pontoon, the gangway. Never once did the spectacle of the "Pan York" divert her. She had no time to be diverted—she was too old, and the ship was just another obstacle to overcome on her way home.

During a brief breathing spell toward the end of the embarkation, when the lines were temporarily halted, Martha said to me that of all the women who had gone by, she had just seen the one who looked wrong, out of place. This woman was the very one who would have gone unnoticed in any other crowd. Not that she was elegantly dressed and the others were not; but her coat turned inside out and folded over her arm, her hair wrapped in an improvised turban, the little vanity of earrings, all conspired to make her look like any woman boarding any boat to go anywhere—precisely what no one else looked like. She carried a valise and a hat box. The hat box, my wife learned when it was handed to her with the air of consigning it to a porter, held something much heavier than hats. Martha suspected shoe-trees.

The last group to mill past us was the most distinct, the North Africans. A few seemed fairly prosperous, a fact made conspicuous by the bright-colored clothes they wore—the dark-faced little girl lost in rabbit fur, the woman in a new silk dress and this year's spring coat. But between them and the overwhelming majority of the others there existed a difference so sharp that it seemed to set them in two separate worlds. The children were shabbily dressed, bare-legged, thin—very thin. Their parents carried few belongings, and these were tied up in bundles or had been dumped into coarse sacks. Although many of the women were strikingly beautiful in the exotic way that Hollywood and Hedy Lamarr have made popular—the dark eyes, the immobile features—they were extremely timid, with hands soft and moist, and now and then they would whimper.

The English quartermaster, who was assisting with the embarkation, shouted at them to keep quiet and stop pushing, and he remarked to us that they were ignorant and helpless and could not be depended on to carry out the most elementary of orders. A group of young North African Jews were going aboard last, he explained, because they were to sleep out on deck.

Perhaps the end of the long evening's work had left him drained of sympathy but nothing in his tone indicated that he thought of them as the same kind of human beings as those who had preceded them. His words struck a discordant note, one that reverberated with terrible familiarity, and at that particular moment it was unbearable.

SHORTLY afterward we left. Thihai, who was still recuperating from a serious illness, had reluctantly gone back just past midnight, and so Martha and I were alone. The air had turned cold. Behind us we could hear Yiddish songs over the ship's loudspeaker system, and then, as we walked, even that died away.

We had the empty, useless feeling of those left standing on the dock as their ship sails away, a terrible longing after it that has no effect at all on the reality of its leaving. All of our lives up to that moment, the lives of educated American agnostic Jews, had barred us from that boat. All of their lives had led them to this moment, the discrimination, the suffering, the war. Our paths had crossed on the Côte d'Azur. They were sailing towards the New Year, four or five days

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away. We were bicycling on towards Italy to see the treasures of the Renaissance. We envied them their future.

Family Reunion in the Land

JULIETTE PARY

FOR hours I have been wandering through the port of Haifa, under the broiling sun, looking for an obscure address; finally I meet a passerby who knows his way around. After giving me directions, he leans towards me with his wrinkled, sunburnt face, and, addressing the obvious newcomer like a member of the family, asks in that tone of affectionate mockery which belongs only to Yiddish: "Woman, why do you look so unhappy?"

"Because I've been sweating in this sun for three hours."

"Pooh! We've been sweating in the sun for thirty years and we're still going strong."

IN THE streets, in the buses, cafés, public places, you find much less politeness and much more real warmth and helpfulness than in other countries. It's an ill-mannered family, but it's a family.

Those who have been living here a long time welcome the newcomers, the *olim*, like younger brothers. They bully you a little, but they take care of you just the same. And together they settle down in the abandoned paternal home, sweep away the wreckage, remove the spider webs, nail things together, paint the walls, and jostle the awkward bystander.

When you debark in Haifa along with some five hundred immigrants, and leave the port with your bundle of possessions on your back, there is always someone to teach you the value of the coinage, to hoist you up on the bus, to fling some insult at you for gazing into the air instead of taking your turn, to make some younger person give you his seat:

"Let her sit down, don't you see she's just arrived. What's she going to think of the people of Eretz?"

"Who cares what she thinks!"

"We do! Give her your seat!"

He gets up, grumbling; the whole bus participates in the incident: "Where are you going, lady? You have relatives in the city? Or children in some kibbutz? Friends? In which one? Oh, I have a cousin there."

Everyone has a cousin everywhere. And if you dig a little, you find you're related to everybody. . . . Aren't we all David's grandchildren?

And that is what creates this familiar, mocking, gruff, and cordial tone, this mixture of arrogance and comradeship. Each man feels called upon to educate his neighbor. The country is a vast rehabilitation center, a sanatorium for returned exiles, a cooperative of reclassified workers. Nowhere else in the world do people take such an interest in the affairs of perfect strangers. But how can one speak of strangers? Why, we've known each other for three thousand years; we've been separated for two thousand years, but now we're together again. . . .

At nightfall we are standing in line, waiting for a bus. My companion, who has children of her own, catches sight of a very young woman with a tiny infant in her arms. Without preamble, she assaults her: "Are you out of your mind, keeping a newborn baby out at this time of night?"

Under my breath, I ask my friend: "You know her?"

"No."

"She's going to tell you to mind your own business."

But in this I am mistaken. The young woman answers in a tone of humble apology: "I wanted to show him to his aunt and it got late. . . ."

"Don't let it happen again!" my friend decrees.

"Oh no, I'll never do it again!" Just like a child promising to be good.

I whisper to my friend: "But Rachel, what business is it of yours?"

"Why, of course it's my business. The health of the children of Eretz is everybody's business."

IN A taxi taken by six of us collectively—people who have missed a bus sometimes group together and take a cab—an old-timer notices that there are some new arrivals among us and does us the honors of the city. "Go slow," he tells the driver. "Pass by the places of interest. We have to educate them, don't we?" The driver—a German intellectual, as one might expect—is most cooperative.

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A pretty young passenger complains: "Na, I don't like your Palestine. The people aren't friendly, you've got to work like a dog. I tried to work as a waitress in a café, but tips are forbidden, so where's the percentage? If my husband weren't here, I wouldn't stay!"

The volunteer guide opens the door: "Do as you like, lady. We won't keep you. We don't need cranks. Go and have your nails polished somewhere else." Frightened, the lady huddles in her corner. "Oh no, I didn't mean. . . ."

The guide turns to the others—and, like a deputy seeking the approval of his electorate, asks: "Was I right to put her in her place?"

"And how!" replies the spoken chorus. "If she doesn't like it here, she can clear out."

THE buses are always full to bursting: people are always on the move in Palestine. Everyone has a son or a daughter in a kibbutz, a relative in the army, another who has just landed. They are all perpetually visiting each other, bringing each other provisions. People of all ages are on the move, all laden with bundles: "We're going to see our children on the farm," or "We're bringing a chicken to grandma in Tel Aviv."

But too many chickens and eggs are diverted to rich customers who pay fantastic prices for them, and the government has set a limit to the amount of farm produce that one is allowed to carry; every bus is stopped on the road by policemen who search the passengers' baggage like customs officers. I was unaware of all this, and when a bearded individual asked me politely: "May I put my packages beside you?" I replied innocently: "Why not?" I was surprised that no one else had acceded to his request. With his long beard and long caftan, he looked very medieval and picturesque.

"Is that your package?" the policeman asked me.

"No, it belongs to this gentleman."

"Oh, it belongs to this gentleman. But he's got other poultry with him." And turning to my bearded neighbor: "All right, get off."

The policeman triumphantly brandishes a basket full of cackling chickens, the passengers all exclaim at once, my medieval friend, on his way off to pay his fine, looks daggers at me and cries out with a gesture worthy of King Lear: "You have murdered me!"

But public opinion in the bus decides: "She was right not to encourage the black market!"

A constant intimacy is engendered by the general lack of space. A hotel room costs at least a pound, so you take a bed for thirty piasters, in a room with two or three other people; you sleep, eat, wash, and dress in company; you live constantly in a dormitory, in an atmosphere of boarding-school, inn, and barracks, all in one. You feel like a conscript, constantly harried by those drill sergeants, the old settlers.

Immigration dominates the scene; every dwelling must be ready at all times to take in new arrivals. Every bed has a cot hidden under it in the daytime. Extra pallets are a necessity, not only on the collectives but in private homes.

All sorts of people can arrive at any moment, and they are as likely to spend the night as a visitor in a European home is to accept a cup of coffee.

I am visiting a family of friends at Kiriat Amal, a working class suburb of Haifa. There are five of us sleeping in one room: the mother, her sister, two babies, and I. All of a sudden the husband arrives, a soldier on pass, and brings another with him. Now there are seven of us. Extra mattresses are brought out. The double bed holds three. And somehow we all get to sleep.

THE plane from the Negev lands at two in the morning, and we are loaded into a truck. Those passengers who know where they are going get off along the road.

"Where are you getting off?" some soldiers ask me.

"I have no idea, I don't know this part of the country."

"You have money? You know the town? No? Well come along to the transit camp with us until tomorrow."

At the camp, the night guard doesn't content himself with giving me a pallet and two blankets. "You must be hungry. Half of my supper's left over, and there's all the bread you want. Tell us what's going on in the Negev."

The transit camp is supposed to be a military establishment, but amid the snores of

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the soldiers, I hear the whimpering of babies and the groans of old men. In the morning, the officers raise hell but they arrange transportation for everybody. It's just a family matter, after all!

I ARRIVE at an isolated kibbutz where I have a friend; they don't even let me say his name: "You'll tell us later whom you want to see. First sit down and eat."

TO CONCEIVE this mode of life, you must remember the size of the country and the population figure, which has not yet reached a million.

From the top of a water tower on the plain of Kfar Saba, I can literally see the whole land of Israel. My glance takes in the entire breadth of the new state from the sea to the mountains: I am amazed at the dwarfed proportions of this narrow band of earth. So many fires smouldering on so small a hearth.

They tell a story which for being Palestinian is no less Jewish:

In the middle of the morning an Israeli sees a friend in traveling dress and asks him: "Where are you going?"

"I'm making a tour of the State of Israel."

"And what are you going to do this afternoon?"

SO IT goes without saying that the State of Israel is a small world. Wherever you go you're sure to meet an old friend, from Russia or Germany or Switzerland or France, someone you've known in an internment camp, a youth hostel, a "school for occupational readjustment. . . ."

Early one morning I am wandering about in the deserted vineyards not far from Tel Aviv.

An angry voice halts me. "What are you doing here?"

"I'm taking a walk."

"Oh, she's taking a walk. Isn't that fine! We're taking a walk at five o'clock in the morning in a country that's still at war!"

It seems that I have strayed into forbidden territory, and the sergeant insults me in Yiddish and Hebrew. . . . Suddenly, taking a closer look at me, he cries out in pure German:

"Good lord! Don't you know me? We were interned together near Toulouse."

"You look better than you did then, Herr Meyer!"

"I'll bet I do. There's no Pétain here!"

Herr Meyer, who was a sergeant in the Germany army in 1914, is in seventh heaven to be back in uniform. He shows me through his camp: "Would you like to see the Arab village? It's off limits, but between old friends from France! . . ."

And in the purest Berlin dialect: "The Arab chief around here was a fine guy. Why, Solomon Rabinovitsch was his blood brother. He left against his will, the English made him leave. Solomon and he opened up their veins and mixed their blood. That's right, Solomon's the one who was in the camp at Castres where there were so many lice back in '42. He's a soldier now, I'm a soldier and so's my son. Come and see us, my wife'll make you a good cup of coffee, we'll talk about Berlin and Toulouse. . . . It's only a couple of steps, see, over there—the little white house under the palm trees!"

ACCORDING to the needs of the moment, I say: *"Einenni medaberet be-ivrit, ani itonait tzarfatit* (I don't speak Hebrew, I'm a French journalist)," and the "French" even more than the "journalist" brings me help and sympathy; or I represent myself as an immigrant who has just landed, and explain myself in a harmonious mixture of German, English, French, Russian, and Yiddish. This gets me some rebuffs, but in other circles I am immediately accepted: she's one of us, no need to give ourselves airs.

I look for work—not to gather material for some article on "A Month with the Workers of Israel," but quite simply to make some money. Piloted by a friend who was formerly a bookseller in Nuremberg and Paris, and who now raises chickens in a German colony known for its model hen houses and surnamed "Kfar Cocorico," I go from farm to farm in search of work.

Of all my friends, the bookseller is the only one who takes my thirst for manual labor seriously. Perhaps he has not even read Gordon, who early in this century preached regeneration by manual labor to the first pioneers of Zion; but to make up for it, he has read and sold to other readers the finest in European literature; he knows Mallarmé and Stefan George by heart; out

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of habit he has on his table, among other things, the very latest work of Hermann Hesse and the literary magazines of Paris and London, which he takes great delight in not reading; his bony frame, his brick-red face present the phenomenon of full vigor at the age of fifty-five; after a century of intellectual strain, his body has come into its own, and my friend the bookseller goes about in khaki shorts attending to his rabbits, his chickens, his kitchen garden, hires out for extra days of work with the neighboring farmers, and tells me, without a word of theoretical justification: "I am happy."

Like a good many German Jews, he became a Zionist only thanks to Hitler. In Palestine it is not a movement or an idea to which he has become attached, but the earth: *adama.* He does not deify it, he simply loves it and this love transfigures his being. It gives him substance, base, anchor, such as he never obtained from his intellectual labors. His sunburnt skin is the same color as the earth; lovingly, he points out to me the deep red color of the clay in which he has dug trenches (for the front is barely two miles from the village and men of all ages go to the front); and forgetting his Western European refinement, he takes me by the lapel like a plain Polish Jew: "You've got to dig in this earth, you've got to battle with its weeds, you've got to live with its redness. Then you'll know what I feel."

Unfortunately the farmers are not of his opinion; they look me over contemptuously: "Neither muscle nor experience. We need experienced women if we can't have strong men. Come back for the orange harvest, that's about all you're good for."

We keep on looking in the German colony: "Good morning, Mrs. Bloch, how is your egg-plant doing?"—"It's been too dry this year." Mrs. Bloch, quite chic in her freshly ironed apron, stands in the middle of her model barnyard and says, *"Lieber Freund,* won't you try some of my feed for your chickens?" It is exactly the same tone in which eighteen years ago she would have said: *"Lieber Freund,* won't you have another cookie?"

The bookseller introduces me to his brother, a physician, who gloomily predicts that like so many European women I shall catch some tropical disease if I start working in the hot sun without going through a period of acclimatization. . . . The two brothers get into an argument on the subject of manure. "I tell you, Gottfried, we've got to manure that potato field right now."—"And I tell you, Hellmuth, that for the present it is not scientifically necessary. . . ." Little by little the conversation turns to the history of the German colony, the origin of the Hebrew place-name, the Greek roots that occur in the Hebrew language. "I tell you, Gottfried, that from a strictly philological point of view this name is of Greek origin." "And I assure you, Hellmuth, that according to Pauly-Wissowa. . . ."

In the end all we find is a job as dishwasher in a collective kitchen (which would almost certainly give me eczema of the hands), a place as maid in the house of a blind old man ("Take it," the local welfare worker advises me. "In Eretz it's best to take the first job that turns up. When people see that you mean well, they'll help you to find something better."), and finally a brilliant position, at nineteen piasters an hour, delivering milk for the cooperative: this involves getting up with the sun, driving a donkey cart through the village, and leaving a can of milk in front of each house. What could be simpler? I am very much tempted. . . . But since milk is liquid, the donkey obstinate, and I myself unpredictable, I can't help thinking of the cost of the spilt milk. I decline. . . .

The ex-bookseller is bitterly contemptuous: "You'll never do anything but write!"

THE moments when a wandering Jew is tempted to remain in Israel (and he would have no Jewish blood in his veins if he were not tempted) are not those when he is subjected to propaganda, or when he watches parading troops or admires the conquests of colonization. It is in the modest, unforeseen moments of everyday life that you think of staying here: in the buses, trucks, shops, barracks, sheds, where you rub elbows with old Jewish mamas from the depths of Poland, with immigrants barely arrived and already armed with a pick-axe or a rifle; with former shopkeepers sweating under the weight of their duffelbags, with those incredibly beautiful Yemenite children and those incredibly ugly Yemenite old men; those swarthy, oriental-looking soldiers who have come from Germany via the French

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maquis; those blonde, husky farm-girls born in Argentina of Russian parents; those curly-headed, blue-eyed Italian girls born of a Serbian mother and an Algerian father. . . . And this whole atmosphere of laughter, of rough jokes, of favors done with an oath, of thick, savorous bonhomie. . . . It is a Jewish story, and more. It is Jewish history.

For a few minutes I stand motionless watching all these people running, sweating, familiarly accosting total strangers, hanging on to the running board of the bus, insulting and helping one another in the same moment, hurrying without haste, like the members of one big family, returning home after a long day like a multitude of prodigal sons sure of a hearty welcome. . . .

Even when the faces, the silhouettes, the costumes, are strange to me, I still recognize that familiar quality that I have found in the Rue des Rosiers in Paris, in those little medieval shuls, in the *shabbes* of an old Biblical Jew, in the tales of Peretz and Mendele, in Heine's *Hebrew Melodies,* in the songs of the Jewish children returning from deportation, in the sudden mocking, tender, sing-song intonation of assimilated European Jews when they remember their grandfathers.

This is my people, my people in its own house. Here my little Jews are at home. The Levys have returned. True, they're a little rambunctious, they put their elbows on the table. . . . Can one reproach them for that? Little by little they will learn good manners.

THIS immigration consists of incredibly heterogeneous elements, yet all in all the amalgam has been successful. True, there is some friction between different sections of the population, the immigrants from Eastern Europe express contempt for the "Yekkes" (Germans), the Yekkes in turn look down on the "Frenke" (North Africans), the Europeans turn up their noses at the Yemenites; but the sense of solidarity is strong: that famous Jewish solidarity which is so much spoken of but which in the dispersion is so often nothing but a phrase.

It is hard to describe the gruff amiability with which the first comer will take you in hand; for one rascal who will try to rob you, there are a hundred who will carry your bags free of charge and waste hours showing you around. We saw a little of this sentiment in France early in 1945, when the French prisoners returned from Germany. But they had been gone for only five years—the Jews are coming home after two thousand. Only a very old nation can have such an innate sense of historical continuity, and the tender, self-mocking voice that goes along with it. . . .

One sunset there are ten of us, armed with rifles and hand-grenades, in the desert of the Negev, exploring a *wadi,* a natural stony hollow; we are silent in this immense cavity lined with flat stones, amid the infinite sandy waste. . . .

"Oi, oi, oi . . ." a soldier suddenly chants. He is about forty, the oldest among us, a former Hungarian intellectual. He takes his head in his hands and intones his words, like an old Jew praying: "Oi, Moses our father, you really weren't so smart! Forty years you dragged us through the desert to bring us to a country like this. You couldn't have picked Switzerland?"

How passionately they become attached to this landscape which like myself they secretly detested at first: it is their home, just as the shack with the army cot is home. The native-born are eager to see Europe, and when they go they write enthusiastic letters about the dense forests, the snowy mountains, the green meadows; but soon they feel homesick for the harsh, stony land of Israel. They experience the pride of transforming it, of being its creators, of improving on the Lord's work: every shrub is planted by them, every bit of land is cleared of stones by their hands before it can be plowed and planted. Well yes, it will take three hundred years before the woods can grow up into forests, before the little strips of green can become prairies; but what are three hundred years to a Jew?

Slower, heavier, stronger than you could ever have imagined him in the lands of persecution, where he was all nerves; already remade by the heat of the sun, he toils, he sweats, he clears the ground, he raises up children. . . .

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MARX'S PROPHECY IN THE LIGHT OF HISTORY

Balance Sheet After a Century

FRANZ BORKENAU

MARXISM presents itself as a *science* capable of practical application. Its best interpreters have laid stress, first and foremost, upon the relation between theory and practice, upon their "unity," which Marx is alleged to have realized for the first time in the whole history of critical thought (in contrast to all previous metaphysics). But the hallmark of modern science is that it treats practice—that is, experimental verification—as the final measure of the validity of all doctrine, and that it makes doctrine itself no more than a function of practice. Is Marxism a science in this sense? Certainly not. Neither Marx himself nor any orthodox Marxist was ever willing to admit that Marxism, like any genuine scientific theory based on experiment, is only a provisional hypothesis subject to constant and unlimited revision as new facts emerge. Yet only such an attitude can be called truly scientific.

Let us therefore stop talking about Marxism as a scientific theory. Marxism is a faith, a dogma, and the task of Marxists has been not to fit doctrine to the facts but, on the contrary, to persuade us that the facts, whatever they are, can always be reconciled with doctrine.

Marx himself was the victim of a profound self-deception. He thought he had broken completely with all religion. But Marxism differs from other types of religion only in that it rejects tradition and revelation, and invokes empirical facts in their stead—yet it invokes only such facts as agree with the faith. No doubt a faith deriving from the experiences of the age of industrial revolution is something profoundly different from a faith handed down from the past or directly revealed. Marx's faith was indeed a "materialist" one—but it remained faith. If religion is defined as belief in the supernatural, then Marxism is not a religion; but if dogmas, especially those whose partial rejection is deemed heresy, always constitute a theology, then Marxism is indeed a religion.

MARXISM *is a religion in this formal* sense. But it would be a serious mistake to think that faith and dogma could ever arise without the promptings of a genuine religious longing. Marxism is a religion not only in form, but also because of the motives that brought it into being. It is a religion of salvation.

Since the 1880's an uninterrupted succession of zealous university professors has been busy "refuting" Marxism. But none of them has recognized what is both obvious and decisive: namely, that the *Communist Manifesto's* conception of the final goal of history is identical with the millenium of the Old Testament prophets and of certain heretical Christian sects. Communism (in its "higher stage of development," as Marx cautiously added in his *Critique of the Gotha Program*) was to be a social order without a state and without rulers, without oppression, competition, or class antagonisms, without exploitation and, of course, without

FOR a century now, the theories of Marxism have been subjected to a many-sided testing in practice such as few other political doctrines have known. FRANZ BORKENAU here tries to draw up a balance sheet of the chief Marxist doctrines: which have seemed to stand up under the test of history, and which have been proved faulty. Mr. Borkenau was active in left-wing German politics in the 20's. He came to England in 1934, and returned to Germany after the war to teach history at the University of Marburg. His books include an important study of the rise of the modern world outlook (in German), and *World Communism*, published in this country in 1939.

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want. This would not be because God would provide all the inhabitants of his Paradise with everything they needed, but because Marx's new demiurge, the "forces of production," would pour out gifts like an inexhaustible horn of plenty. There would be a social order in which human enmities, national states, and wars would disappear. Man would finally prove that he was conceived in goodness, and religion would become superfluous—as would all superimposed morality, and the family itself insofar as it was an institution of private property.

Lenin's main contribution to Marxist thought was to revive this messianism. He was completely right in accusing the Western schools of Marxism of having tampered with the genuine doctrine. Lenin's painstaking and faultless philological reconstruction of the millennial aspect of Marxism served to remove all doubt that Marx's conception of the higher or final stage of Communism was anything but a kind of crude doctrinal belief in a messianic age. Everything that Marx says in this connection can be found in Isaiah, and the Waldensians, Taborites, and Anabaptists repeated the same message in their sermons. Only by keeping this in mind is it possible to see at how many points Marx simply reinvigorated the ideas of visionaries of previous ages, and to what extent he added to this vision new elements deriving from the habits of thought of his own age. Actually, Marxism states this: previously the hope of a life without want, war, or injustice was mere utopianism, and therefore nothing but a religious dream; but the technological revolution now provides us with the certainty that this dream can and will be materialized on earth. This is the "scientific" element in Marx's "scientific socialism."

THERE lie hidden in Marx's teachings unformulated metaphysical assumptions that Marx himself overlooked, because, like all prophets, he felt that he was announcing something entirely new, and he therefore refused to recognize any connections between his doctrines and those of former times—that is, those of "utopian" millenarianism. And although he so painstakingly quoted every forerunner of his in the field of political economy, he never liked to be reminded of his dependence upon the doctrines of the French Enlightenment either. Marx does not, as far as I am aware, ever quote Condorcet, yet his indestructible faith in progress derives directly from that theoretician of the French Gironde. That all human wickedness was due only to social conditions, he regards as an axiom needing no proof, and he concludes that the essential goodness of human nature would naturally flower in a Communist society. Surely this faith in human goodness shows Marx to be a rather naive follower of Rousseau—whom he nevertheless despised.

Marxism can be said in effect to have brought about a reconciliation between those two mutually hostile tendencies of the French Enlightenment: the Girondist faith in "progress" and the Jacobin belief in "a return to nature." This synthesis is not the smallest factor among the forces that gave Marxism its impetus. The idea that the progress of knowledge and of industry would restore the harmony of primitive societies probably marks the highest point attainable in millennial utopianism.

Belief in the natural goodness of man has not always been professed by people of especial kindliness. In Rousseau it was actually the expression of a deep bitterness, of a quarrel with life that ended in madness and suicide. In the case of Marx—and of the anarchists too—an enormous bitterness likewise lay at the root of this faith in man's natural goodness. If man was good by nature, then all human wickedness was the personal responsibility of those who had created and maintained the conditions that made him evil. In the realm of theory, Marx had avoided this conclusion (which both Rousseau and the anarchists upheld) by treating the whole course of history, from primitive down to ultimate Communism, as an inevitable process of evolution for which no individual or group of individuals could be held responsible. But every critic of

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Marxism has noted that, at this point more than any other, Marx could be seen to be playing with an empty formula that served to hide his deeper impulses. Every line of Marx's writings betrays a fund of hatred. With the Jacobins and with the anarchists, he shared the conviction that it was necessary to exterminate all those who were preventing man from being good. In his *The Gods are Athirst,* Anatole France, that sceptical Voltairian socialist, drew with acid humor the portrait of a young Jacobin who could not await the abolition of the death penalty—but first all enemies had to be exterminated! Nowhere more than here did Marx reveal himself a son of the Jacobins; and at no other point was Lenin so much his heir. It was no accident that Lenin, in going back to the roots of Marxism, defined the Marxist as a "Jacobin united to the proletariat by unbreakable ties."

Marx and Lenin share further common ground with both the Jacobins and the anarchists: for them the "circle of the wicked" expands as they gaze at it until it comes to include everybody save themselves and their closest followers. Those who lead the movement of liberation into false paths are to be considered even more responsible for the continuance of evil than are the outright partisans of the status quo, and they therefore deserve even fiercer hatred. So far in history, belief in the pure and essential goodness of man (or of a group of men) has always been the preliminary to massacre. Marxism took more time to establish a "reign of terror" than did Rousseau's movement, but only because Marxism in the 19th century soon became "bourgeois"—that is, most Marxists quickly lost faith in a millennium and in the absolute goodness of human nature. When Lenin, however, restored its religious element to Marxism, a reign of terror followed immediately.

THE sense of an imminent doom threatening man and his salvation by a last-minute intervention is the driving force of orthodox Marxism in the field of practical politics, and also the factor responsible for its sudden transition from a *belief in progress* to a *dictatorship by force.* To establish the identity between Marx's conception of the final stage of Communism and the beliefs that inspired the ravings of the Anabaptists of Muenster, three hundred years before the publication of the *Communist Manifesto,* is not enough. It is also necessary to demonstrate the influence of this doctrinal element upon Marx's concrete analyses of the political and economic problems of his own age.

It is well known that Marx is a prophet whose political forecasts have gone wrong time and again. This was partly the result of his remarkable lack of practical sense—a lack that was not unconnected with his millennial faith. His was a distorted picture of reality, a picture dominated by a belief in the imminence of some apocalyptic upheaval that would change the whole social world and, with it, human nature. Capitalism was moving towards an increasingly intolerable state of tension; on the one side wealth was accumulating in ever greater concentrations, and this brought with it the increasing accumulation of misery on the other side. The language of religion had described this development as a state of growing sinfulness that would call forth in the end a terrible divine punishment. God would intervene miraculously to destroy the sinners and save the remnant of the just, and, most important, "the last would be the first."

Marx appropriated this whole apocalyptic picture quite unwittingly; it was derived from the Old and in part from the New Testament, and it had been elaborated in the teachings of various Christian sects of the poor, such as the Taborites and the Anabaptists. That Marx himself overlooked this debt can be explained in part by the existence of an intermediate link: he had derived his own apocalypse directly from the extreme wing of the Jacobins, who had secularized the idea by adapting it to *their* scheme of things. Yet the mistakes in Marx's analysis of the development of capitalism that are attributable to this apocalyptic view cannot be excused exclusively by Marx's tendency to be overly impressed by the suf-

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ferings of the proletariat during the Industrial Revolution—seeing in them that "growth of sinfulness" which would inevitably bring on the "end of days"—and by his failure to make due allowance for the forces tending to reduce this misery in the further course of capitalist development. The cause of his fundamental mistake was more serious than that. The thing that mattered most to Marx was precisely his *vision* of an apocalyptic catastrophe; and his capacity for analyzing historical developments was completely paralyzed wherever tendencies appeared that contradicted this vision.

It has often been observed that though Marx was quite correct in many respects in his analysis of the trends of English capitalism, he failed completely to understand the development of the British labor movement. This was a remarkable contradiction. The fact is that Marx viewed industrial capitalism as the main and constant factor in the development of the labor movement precisely because it had produced the labor movement in the first place and seemed by its own internal laws to be driving it towards revolution. Had Marx been primarily a scientist seeking the laws of social development, he would, however, have focused his political analysis on the British labor movement itself in the same way that he focused his economic analysis on British industry. It is true that he did this as long as the British labor movement took the form of Chartism—which he misinterpreted as a thoroughly revolutionary affair. But when, after 1850, the movement adopted unmistakably peaceful and gradualist methods, Marx lost interest in it and thereby deprived himself of the best means of attaining to that social insight which alone would have enabled him to establish a correct theory of the labor movement and of the transformation of capitalism into socialism.

Actually, as we see today, the labor movement has grown more and more peaceful and class antagonisms have decreased as capitalism has developed. Not America, England, Switzerland, or Belgium—but Russia, China, the Balkans, and Mexico have become the theaters of revolution. The social revolution of which Marx dreamt has materialized exclusively in non-capitalist countries, societies where capitalism had just touched the surface of economic life. "Capitalism" and "revolution," which Marx saw as Siamese twins, have proved to be mutually exclusive in actual fact. This was Marx's major error in the field of political sociology.

The real trend of events, therefore, has not confirmed Marx's apocalyptical expectations. When Lenin resurrected these, he, like Marx before him, had to attempt to escape the contradiction between dogma and reality. But plain facts could now no longer be denied, especially since in August 1914 the patriotic feelings of the workers of all countries had been proven beyond any ambiguity. Lenin reacted to the attitude of the labor movements of Western Europe in August 1914 with an outburst of fury. As an "explanation," he offered the notion that the proletariat of the West was not a real proletariat, but a "labor aristocracy" bribed by the bourgeoisie. This "theory" had some basis in reality; there was, and is, that great chasm between Western wealth and Eastern misery which today makes even the Rumanian workers appear "bourgeois" in the eyes of the Russian soldiers. Thus, despite all its own assumptions, integral Marxism was forced to seek its home in the East and not in the West. Its faith in the revolutionary role of social misery corresponded better to the facts in the economically backward East, and the same was true of its apocalyptical vision, which accorded better with habits of thought there.

From all this it would appear that what is most false about political Marxism is the historical role it assigns the working class. During the last hundred years, the social and economic order of the West, which depends upon industrialism, has been subject to a constant process of change. Extreme individualism has been replaced by an increasing measure of planning. The realm of public property is expanding. The state's share in the national income has grown to

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an amazing extent everywhere. But it would be hard to argue that all this has been the achievement exclusively of the proletariat. In England these steps were taken by Conservative, Liberal, and Labor governments, without difference. In Germany—whose development did not, to be sure, proceed on classical capitalist lines—Bismarck and Hitler mark the decisive stages in the growth of a statist economy. It would also be a mistake to think that all these forces acted primarily under the pressure of the working classes. There was also the pressure, sometimes much more effective, of farmers and peasants, of the lower middle classes, of powerful bureaucracies, and, not infrequently, of capitalist groups seeking additional security. The New Deal is, after all, perhaps the classical case. Insofar as the CIO can be said to represent the "class-conscious" sector of the American labor movement, it owes its existence to Roosevelt's efforts to create one more mass support for his planning measures. It would be more correct to say that the CIO is a product of the planned state than that state planning is a result of CIO pressure.

The fact is that labor has just as great an interest in limiting the power of the state as any other class in society. It has a compelling interest in the right freely to choose its employer and its place of residence and in liberty of action for unions and cooperatives. The so-called "dictatorship of the proletariat" in the Soviet Union amounts to nothing more, from the viewpoint of the individual worker as well as that of the labor movement, than total helplessness, oppression, and dire misery. No class can maintain its economic and social position without the possibility of defending its interests by action independent of the power of the state.

And yet there is another side to the picture, which becomes apparent as soon as one breaks the spell of the eschatological aspect of Marxism. Marx predicted a revolutionary catastrophe that would suddenly transform capitalism into socialism. This catastrophe has failed to materialize in the most highly developed capitalist countries, but nonetheless it cannot be denied that the transformation of capitalism into socialism is proceeding, even if only step by step and not with radical completeness.

When Marx published the *Manifesto,* sociologists and economists were divided into two camps, with a larger group believing in "the eternal life of capitalism" and a smaller expecting some miracle that would suddenly introduce socialism. Marx was the first, and, in the days of the *Manifesto,* the only man clearly to perceive that socialism was not an invention but rather the very shape of things to come, and that it only remained for the conditions for its emergence to mature first within the womb of the old society. Therein rested the decisive superiority of Marxism to all other contemporary thinking on these matters. And it was this insight that the English Fabians and the German revisionists held on to.

But Marx was not only right in predicting that *capitalism* would transform itself into *socialism,* he was also quite correct in predicting *revolution.* A revolution, however, that can scarcely be taken as the end-product of advanced capitalism. Social revolution has developed only on the fringes of the capitalist order and, despite all the kindly intentions of the Communists, it has not managed to reach the center. But if Marx was wrong about the proletarian revolution as far as the main industrial countries are concerned, he was certainly right in predicting that the transition from capitalism to socialism would take place amid terrible worldwide convulsions, in an age of wars and revolutions (though the wars are not class wars and the revolutions have little that is genuinely proletarian about them).

It was the weakness of the reformists that, while they accepted Marx's analysis of the socialist trends within capitalist society, they failed to recognize the element of reality in Marx's revolutionary prognostications. Conversely, labor's revolutionary wing, in accepting Marx's revolutionary forecast, refused categorically to admit the necessity of

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revising it in any respect. So it was that the reformist wing failed wherever it found itself confronted with a revolutionary situation; it was a success in the English-speaking countries, in Scandinavia, the Netherlands, and Switzerland, and to a much smaller extent also in France—but not elsewhere. Whereas the revolutionary wing split almost from the beginning into two groups, both foreshadowed in the conflict between Marx and Bakunin. Later on, one of these wings—the half-syndicalist group best represented by Rosa Luxemburg, which was determined to uphold the libertarian traditions of the West—found itself enmeshed in the contradiction between liberty and the idea of a revolutionary dictatorship. The other half of the revolutionary wing culminated in Bolshevism.

WHAT kind of correction, then, does the Marxist revolutionary idea need? The Communists themselves admit that the revolution is not proceeding according to Marx's schedule, a concession which is usually expressed by saying that the "weakest link" of capitalism broke first. But may we then expect the triumphant progress of the revolution from the periphery to the center, especially now that it has the support of the armed power of Russia? Though history alone can give the final answer, Marxist utopianism still feeds on this expectation, and Marx's apocalyptical dream has been transformed into the vision of a conquest of the West by Eastern despotism. But even this vision, for all its fierceness, is still inspired in part by those elements which created the original Marxist ideal.

Every revolution begins with a liberation and ends up in a despotism. Every revolution culminates in a revolutionary attack upon the rest of the world. Every revolution has its libertarian, its Jacobin, and its Napoleonic phases, which mark the throttling of the revolutionary impulse and lead on to the collapse of the revolutionary regime. Nor is this all. The positive and practical results of the whole revolutionary crisis—that is, the new social order—only emerge clearly and completely once the revolutionary cycle has been completed with the collapse of the Napoleonic regime. The paradox involved in every revolution is that only when it comes to an end do the right conditions appear for the full emergence of its results. And this paradox has its source in the apocalyptic vision that seems to accompany all revolutions. Only when this vision has faded, and with it the revolutionary regime, can the new social order develop along the lines natural to it.

Applied to the present, this morphology of revolutions would seem to indicate that Stalinism's chances for world conquest are pretty much those of Napoleon; but it would also seem to indicate that a "defeat of Communism" would no more involve a "defeat of socialism" than the fall of Napoleon involved the final defeat of the liberal principles of the French Revolution. In a word, the necessary correction of Marx's analysis of the process of revolution again involves the elimination of the apocalyptical elements of Marxism. Marxist revolutionaries tend to treat their conquest of one country as a final, irrevocable event opening a new phase in human history. Nothing is more likely, however, than that this conquest will prove merely an episode, a tragic episode, perhaps an unavoidable one, on the road from an old society to a new one.

THIS provides a *locus standi* for an evaluation of the most exclusively theoretical part of Marxism, namely its general sociology, its "historical materialism." In Marx's and Engels' own writings this subject does not amount to much more than a heading. The text consists of a few haphazard observations. This surely constitutes an unusual situation. Rousseau, in his own way, had much more to offer, and the Christian millenarians still more. Marx's disciples themselves have contributed astonishingly little to a further elaboration of the sketchy foundations of historical materialism. Marxism has boasted too much of its anti-religious foundations to have allowed a truly religious dogmatic elaboration of its basic apocalyptic vision—and that is the only kind that would

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have been relevant. But on the other hand Marxism has also been much too dogmatic to produce significant results in the field of independent scientific research. Nevertheless, the concepts of historical materialism have exerted what has to be termed a decisive influence on so-called "bourgeois" science, that is, on those social scientists who have not been controlled by dogma. Here historical materialism has proved itself a fertile idea, and we can say of it what has already been said about Marx's political doctrine: sterile and destructive where manipulated as a dogma, it became fertile and progressive in the hands of the adversaries of doctrinaire Marxism.

Both the narrowest and widest aspects of Marxism made themselves felt wherever that doctrine influenced science. Its economic point of view was applicable to the problems of the second half of the 19th century almost without qualification. Marx's faith in the decisive importance of a metaphysical entity called "economic life" tallied with the philosophy of the typical bourgeois; but Marx was superior to the middle-class believers in economic determinism because, in addition to the economic interests of the bourgeoisie, he saw other economic interests and was able to make their competitive struggle the central point of his interpretation of history. In a sense Marxism can be taken as a perfect image of the last period of the bourgeois age. The more it was officially anathematized, the more it became the secret regent of contemporary thought.

But Marx also widened this view into the theory that, not nature, but *man's struggle to control nature* is the essential content of human history. And it is this notion that has given a decisive impulse to the modern social sciences. In man's struggle with nature lies the difference between human and beast, since animals remain simply part of their natural environment. There are, to be sure, many ambiguities here. It is implied that man, on the one hand, is bound to nature but, on the other, confronts it as an independent power. The attempt, therefore, to identify Marx's philosophy of history with simple deterministic materialism as a general metaphysical system is rather thoughtless.

FINALLY, what is perhaps the strongest element in Marxism is its insight that we are on the point of a new and decisive phase in the struggle with nature. Our control of natural forces, our recent success in penetrating the very processes of the creation of matter—all these suggest the beginnings of an age whose culture will differ from our present urban culture no less than the latter differs from neolithic rural culture.

Or will all higher civilization disappear with the fuller liberation of the new forces now at our command? If so, then Marx was fundamentally wrong. But if mankind succeeds in making the drastic transition, at whatever sacrifice, then Marx's basic view will have been verified. And it will also certainly have been established that a decisive step forward in the control of nature is always a decisive step in human history.

This experiment may last a thousand years and surely nobody today can foretell the end-result. One thing is certain: the immature apocalyptic vision that expects an industrial proletariat, armed with the flaming sword of justice, to bring about a heaven on earth will then appear as what it truly is: a grotesque exaggeration of the importance of one particular episode of modern social history.

Marx's basic fallacy consists in combining an earthworm's perspective with large hypotheses that apply to thousands of years of human history. But if Marx's truculent vision of the apocalypse prompts criticism and even ridicule, nothing can gainsay the fundamental contribution that his daring mind has made to the essential course of modern thought.

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PLEASURE ISLAND

W. H. AUDEN

WHAT there is as a surround to our figures
Is very old, very big,
Very formidable indeed; The ocean
Stares right past us as though
No one here was worth drowning, and the eye, true
Blue all summer, of the sky
Would not miss a huddle of huts related
By planks, a dock, a state
Of undress and improvised abandon
Upon shadowless sand.
To send a cry of protest or a call for
Protection up into all
Those dazzling miles, to add, however sincerely,
One's occasional tear
To that volume, would be rather silly,
Nor is there one small hill
For the hopeful to climb, one tree for the hopeless
To sit under and mope;
The coast is a blur and without meaning
The churches and routines
Which stopped there and never cared or dared to
Cross over to interfere
With this outpost where nothing is wicked
But to be sorry or sick,
But one thing unneighborly, work. Sometimes
A visitor may come
With notebooks intending to make its quiet
Emptiness his ally
In accomplishing immortal chapters,
But the hasty tap-tap-tap
Of his first day becomes by the second
A sharp spasmodic peck
And by the third is extinct; we find him
Next improving his mind
On the beach with a book, but the dozing
Afternoon is opposed
To rhyme and reason and chamber music,
The plain sun has no use
For the printing press, the wheel, the electric
Light, and the waves reject
Sympathy: soon he gives in, stops stopping
To think, lets his book drop

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And lies, like us, on his stomach watching
    As bosom, backside, crotch
Or other sacred trophy is borne in triumph
    Past his adoring by
Souls he does not try to like; or, getting
    Up, gives all to the wet
Clasps of the sea or surrenders his scruples
    To some great gross braying group
That will be drunk till Fall. The tide rises
    And falls, our household ice
Drips to death in the dark and our friendships
    Prepare for a weekend
They will probably not survive: for our
    Lenient amusing shore
Knows in fact about all the dyings, is in
    Fact our place, namely this
Place of a skull, a place where the rose of
    Self-punishment will grow.
The sunset happens, the bar is copious
    With fervent life that hopes
To make sense, but down the beach some decaying
    Spirit shambles away,
Kicking idly at driftwood and dead shellfish
    And excusing itself
To itself with evangelical gestures
    For having failed the test:
The moon is up there, but without warning,
    A little before dawn,
Miss Tea-Cup, life and soul of the party,
    Wakes with a dreadful start,
Sure that whatever—O God!—she is in for
    Is about to begin,
Or hearing, beyond the hushabye noises
    Of sea and Me, just a voice
Ask as one might the time or a trifle
    Extra her money and her life.

W. H. Auden's latest volume of verse, *The Age of Anxiety*, was published last year by Random House. Mr. Auden was born in York, England, in 1907 and came to the United States as a permanent resident in 1939.

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EICHMANN: ADMINISTRATOR OF EXTERMINATION

"The Definitive Solution of the Jewish Problem"

L. POLIAKOV

HITLER'S pronouncements on the "Jewish question" were generally regarded as the fantasies of a disordered mind. But Hitler was able, alas, to implement his fantasies so that they had consequences in the world of reality. To work out the practical details of Jewish extermination he required the services of a bureaucrat—a neat and competent administrator. Such a man was Adolf Eichmann, who is said to have told a subordinate: "I will jump into my grave laughing, for to know that I have six million people on my conscience will be a source of extraordinary satisfaction." Adolf Eichmann did not share in the fame of his superiors Himmler and Heydrich, yet he was more directly involved in the extermination of European Jews than any other single man.

ADOLF EICHMANN was born in 1907 or 1908 in a small town in Westphalia, but his family soon moved to the Austrian city of Linz and it was there that he spent his childhood and youth. His father was a small manufacturer of electrical equipment. After completing secondary school (he later took pride in having had the same history teacher as Adolf Hitler), Eichmann wished to become an engineer; but his father's business was on the downgrade and he was unable to complete his studies at the Linz technical school.

This was the background common to so many Nazi careers: bourgeois beginnings, the crisis of 1929, the difficulties and increasing bitterness of the semi-intellectual. But it takes a good deal more than this to produce an Adolf Eichmann.

In 1931 Eichmann became salesman for an oil company and at the same time joined the Austrian National Socialist party, where he met Kaltenbrunner. For three years he carried on both these activities. In 1934 he was wanted by the Austrian police and fled to Germany, where he enrolled in the Nazi Austrian Legion which was then being formed in Southern Bavaria. It was not long before he found his true vocation and applied for admission to the SD (Sicherheitsdienst, the Nazi secret service).

Dieter Wisliceny, one of his subordinates, who was captured by the Americans and testified at length before the Nuremberg Tribunal, described Eichmann as a man of over average height (5 feet 9½ inches), slender, and blond. He was a rather timid man who could never get rid of a certain provincial awkwardness. He shunned all "honors" and later, when he was one of the chiefs of the all-powerful SD, managed to keep away from all official ceremonies, both in Berlin and on his numerous foreign missions. He liked to be the "man in the shadow." He seems to have been relatively impersonal, living without ostentation at a time when he was dis-

ADOLF EICHMANN, author of the plan to exterminate the Jews, and the Nazi official responsible for its administration, was and remains a figure of mystery. Few men were close to him, none knew him well, and no one knows whether he is now alive or dead. In this article L. POLIAKOV assembles all that is known of this administrator of mass murder—in the very elusiveness of his personality an archetypal figure of modern history—and makes available for the first time the text of the minutes of the conference initiating the official project to "cleanse the German living-space of Jews." Mr. Poliakov is research director of the Centre de Documentation Juive Contemporaine in Paris and a regular contributor to the Parisian monthly *Le Monde Juif*. He is the author of several basic works on the Nazi treatment of Jews. Mr. Poliakov was born in Leningrad in 1910 and received his degree in law at the Sorbonne. This article has been translated from the French by Ralph Manheim.

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posing of hundreds of millions of marks. He was a good father and family man, at least during the early years of his married life (married in 1936, he had three sons).

These facts are less than astonishing when one recalls that the worst of psychological monsters have flowered amid the petty, middle-class virtues. This is just as true of Fouché, Landru, or Himmler, as of Eichmann. Schoolboy sorrows, a difficult youth may have contributed, but the entire psychological atmosphere of Nazi Germany would seem to be the real cause. One is quite justified in speaking of "bourgeois repressions," particularly in the case of the Germans. Ancestral habits of obedience and discipline had inhibited the natural violence of the instincts; but once given a field of operation that was both legally and ideologically consecrated, the instincts burst loose, with what ferocity we know. At the same time, the accumulated record of "little virtues" regularly exercised provides an abundance of that self-justification which the vast majority of men require.

HAVING entered the SD in August 1934, Eichmann started out as a small functionary in charge of the card file on the Freemasons. Here he revealed the qualities of an excellent clerk and organizer. A year later, when Himmler decided to set up a police museum at SD headquarters, it was Eichmann who was appointed to organize it.

It was no doubt this appointment that started him on his way toward those sinister activities in which he was to distinguish himself. For this museum included a collection of old Hebrew coins, of Jewish ritual objects and books—the first fruits of Nazi pillaging expeditions—and these things aroused Eichmann's curiosity. Though he had never studied any foreign language, he now took up the study of Hebrew, which he learned to read quite fluently, though he could never speak it. Perhaps he thought that in this way he might penetrate the enemy's secret. He also learned to read in Yiddish. The latter enabled him, in the course of his activities in Berlin, Vienna, Prague, to weave a certain air of mystery around his origins, and to inspire a legend according to which he had been born at Sarona, a colony of the German Templars in Palestine, and had attended Jewish schools as a boy. (This legend was taken up by a number of Jewish newpapers after the German capitulation.) It is also believed in some quarters that these abilities enabled him to avoid punishment after Hitler's fall by passing as a Jewish survivor and slipping into some displaced-persons camp.

When a section for Jewish Affairs (which had formerly been handled by the Freemason section) was set up at the SD, Eichmann had himself transferred to it. Soon he was appointed specialist in questions relating to Zionism. In his own way, he seems to have felt a certain respect for the Zionists, as is attested by a report of Veesenmeyer, German Ambassador to Hungary. The question had arisen of permitting a certain number of Hungarian Jews to emigrate to Palestine; Eichmann had opposed it, saying: "Almost without exception these people are old Zionists, valuable biological material; their emigration to Palestine is highly undesirable." In 1937 Eichmann himself went to Palestine but was expelled after forty-eight hours by the British administration; to make up for it, he spent four weeks in Cairo, where he established close relations with a representative of the Mufti.

EICHMANN'S real rise in career dates from 1938. Shortly after the Anschluss he was transferred to Vienna. Here he submitted to Heydrich a plan for a "central bureau of Jewish emigration," for the purpose of inducing the Jews to emigrate as quickly as possible. All methods were of course permissible. In this work Eichmann soon revealed astounding resources of cold-blooded brutality and great organizational ability. He was made. He had gained the full confidence of Heydrich; in Vienna he again fell in with Kaltenbrunner. In one year he rose from the rank of Untersturmführer (second lieutenant) to that of Hauptsturmführer (captain); such rapid promotion was rare in

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the Nazi hierarchy. In the spring of 1939 we find him in Prague, where he pursued the same activities, covering occupied Bohemia and Moravia. Early in the war, the whole German political and criminal police apparatus was consolidated under a single organization, the Reichssicherheitshauptamt (RSHA), with Heydrich at its head. Eichmann, meanwhile promoted to the rank of Sturmbannführer (major), became chief of the section in the RSHA's Gestapo that dealt with Jewish and ecclesiastical affairs.

Germany was at war. Voluntary or forced emigration after the pattern organized by Eichmann in Vienna and Prague had become impossible. But the Nazis were counting on a quick victory. At that time, Hitler's great plan for making Europe *judenrein,* set forth in *Mein Kampf,* seemed close to fulfilment. A number of Nazi "specialists" were enthusiastic about sending all the Jews of Europe to Madagascar. Why Madagascar? Any attempt to analyze and explain Nazi behavior ultimately encounters a certain irreducible element of the irrational, which almost appears to be specifically German. One recalls the familiar joke in pre-Hitler Germany about a Nazi lecturer who declares: "Who is to blame for Germany's troubles? Who? Well, ladies and gentlemen, I'll tell you. It's the Jews." A voice in the audience: "The Jews *and* the bicycle-riders!" The lecturer: "Why the bicycle-riders?" The voice in the audience: "Why the Jews?"

At all events, the Madagascar "solution" was in the air: Eichmann took it up and submitted a memorandum to Himmler, suggesting that the preparatory work be begun at once. Himmler agreed and commissioned Eichmann to draw up a detailed plan. With a few helpers (among them Dieter Wisliceny, who is the source of this information) he set to work. A series of investigations at the Ministry of Colonies in Paris provided certain essential geographical data. Shipping specialists were consulted and formation of a pool of the North German Lloyd and the Hamburg America Line was considered. The expense would be defrayed by the Jews themselves. Of course, it was essential to know how many Jews would have to be deported, and beginning in August 1940, Eichmann sent agents to all occupied countries to collect statistics. (We shall read these figures further on; they were to serve a very different purpose.) Wisliceny assures us that as late as the summer of 1941 this plan was being seriously considered in Berlin. The law of September 26, 1941 providing for the final confiscation of the property of German Jews made the stipulation: "The confiscated assets and holdings will be utilized for all purposes connected with the solution of the Jewish question."

ON JUNE 22, 1941 the Germans invaded Russia. After first successes, however, the highest political circles began to realize that the war would be a long-drawn-out encounter. The Madagascar Plan would have to be postponed indefinitely. Some other solution was required. On July 31, Goering commissioned Heydrich "to take all the preparatory measures of an administrative, economic, and financial nature, required for a general solution of the Jewish question in the European territories under German influence."

And Goering continued: "I commission you moreover to submit to me as soon as possible an over-all project comprising the preparatory measures of a technical and financial nature required for the definitive solution of the Jewish question, which remains our objective."

Charged with the actual drawing up of the project, Eichmann, the bureaucrat and organizer, worked out the details of the most monstrous scheme in human history. Eichmann's plan was read by Heydrich at an interministerial conference held in his office on January 20, 1942, and attended by representatives of all the ministries of the Third Reich. (The date had originally been set for December 9, 1941, but had been postponed "in view of the circumstances"—the entry of the United States into the war. No one could have foreseen that Pearl Harbor would gain a few weeks time for the Jews of Europe.)

It is worthwhile to quote extensively from

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the minutes of the conference at which Eichmann's plan was presented. The aim—the total physical extermination of the Jews—is expressed quite plainly. Yet it should be noted that throughout even Heydrich and Eichmann found it necessary to speak in veiled terms. The text of the minutes of the conference follows:

I. Present at the conference which occurred on January 20, 1942 at Berlin, am Grossen Wannsee No. 56-58, concerning the definitive solution of the Jewish problem: Gauleiter Dr. Meyer and Reichsleiter Dr. Leibbrand, Reich Ministry for Occupied Territories in the East; State Secretary Dr. Stuckart, Reich Ministry of the Interior; State Secretary Neumann, Four Year Plan; State Secretary Dr. Preisler, Reich Ministry of Justice; State Secretary Dr. Buchler, Office of the Governor General; under-Secretary of State Luther, Ministry of Foreign Affairs; SS-Oberführer Klopfer, Office of the NSDAP; Chief of Cabinet Krictzinger, Reich Chancellery; SS-Obergruppenführer Hofmann, Central Bureau for Race and Immigration; SS-Gruppenführer Müller, SS-Obersturmbannführer Eichmann, Reichssicherheitshauptamt (RSHA); SS-Oberführer Dr. Schaugarth, Commandant of Security Police and SD in the Gouvernement Général; and SS-Sturmbannführer Dr. Lange, Commandant of Security Police and SD for the District General of Latvia, acting as representative of the commandant of Security Police and SD for the Reich Commissariat for Eastern Territories.

II. SS-Obergruppenführer Heydrich, head of the Security Police and the SD, first informed the conference of his appointment, signed by the Reichsmarshal, as executive in charge of preparing the definitive solution of the Jewish problem in Europe. He then indicated the aim of the conference as being:

To clarify questions of principle. The Reichsmarshal had expressed his desire of having submitted to him a draft project covering the technical and economic questions involved in the definitive solution of the Jewish problem in Europe. Accordingly, these questions should be discussed by all the central bureaus, with a view to coordination of procedure.

By order of the Reichsmarshal, a central bureau for Jewish emigration was set up in January 1939 at Reich echelon. The head of the Security Police and the SD was placed in charge of it. The principal functions of this bureau were: (a) To take all measures necessary to increase Jewish emigration. (b) To direct this flow of emigration. (c) To accelerate emigration in special cases.

The aim was to cleanse the German living-space of its Jews by legal methods.

In spite of all difficulties, a sum total of 537,000 Jews were induced to emigrate between the seizure of power and October 10, 1941, as follows: after January 30, 1933, from the old Reich: 360,000; after March 15, 1938, from Austria: 147,000; after March 15, 1939, from the protectorate of Bohemia-Moravia: 30,000.

This emigration was financed by the Jews themselves, that is, by the Jewish political organizations. In order to prevent the proletarianized Jews from remaining in the countries of emigration, we operated on the principle that the wealthy Jews according to their means should finance the emigration of those without resources; all wealthy Jews were required to pay an emigration indemnity into a fund that went to meet the financial obligations of the poor Jews, which had to be settled prior to emigration.

In addition to the sums in Reichsmarks, it was necessary to obtain sums in foreign exchange for deposits and landing fees. In order to economize the Reich's limited supply of foreign exchange, the Jewish financial organizations abroad were summoned to provide the Jewish organizations in the country of emigration with the necessary foreign exchange.

By October 31, 1941, foreign Jews had placed at the disposal of their coreligionaries a sum total of 9,500,000 dollars, all by way of donation.

At that date, the Reichsführer-SS and Head of the German Police, considering the dangers which emigration would present in

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time of war, and in view of the possibilities offered by the Eastern territories, prohibited all Jewish emigration.

III. Since then emigration has been replaced by another possible solution which has been approved by the Führer: evacuation of the Jews to the East.

These solutions can only be regarded as palliatives. But they have given us much practical experience indispensable for the definitive solution of the Jewish problem.

It will be necessary to apply the definitive solution of the Jewish question to approximately eleven million persons, distributed as follows:

Old Reich	131,800
Austria	43,700
Territories of the East	420,000
Gouvernement Général of Bialystok	2,284,000
Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia	74,200
Bialystok	400,000
Estonia (already cleansed of Jews)	000
Latvia	3,500
Lithuania	34,000
Belgium	43,000
Denmark	5,600
France (occupied zone)	165,000
(unoccupied zone)	700,000
Greece	69,000
Netherlands	160,800
Norway	1,300
Bulgaria	48,000
England	330,000
Finland	2,300
Ireland	4,000
Italy (including Sardinia)	58,000
Albania	200
Croatia	40,000
Portugal	3,000
Rumania (including Bessarabia)	342,000
Sweden	8,000
Switzerland	18,000
Serbia	10,000
Slovakia	88,000
Spain	6,000
European Turkey	55,000
Hungary	742,800
USSR	5,000,000
Ukraine	2,994,684
White Russia (excluding Bialystok)	446,484
Total in excess of	11,000,000*

In line with the definitive solution of the Jewish problem, the Jews will be transferred under suitable escort to the Eastern territories and there enrolled in the labor service. Formed into large labor detachments, those Jews able to work, both men and women, will work at road building as they move into these territories; it goes without

*These statistics furnished by Eichmann reveal a certain element of fantasy. The figures for France supplied by the Paris office of the SD were much closer to reality (occupied zone: 70,000; unoccupied zone: 200,000).

Eichmann himself set the extermination figures at six million. Sturmbannführer Wilhelm Höttl, chief of the Balkan section of Bureau VI (Information) of the RSHA, has furnished some interesting details in this connection:

"At the end of August 1944, I had an interview with SS-Obersturmbannführer Adolf Eichmann whom I had known since 1938. This conversation took place at my apartment in Budapest. At that time Eichmann, to the best of my knowledge, was chief of Section IV (Gestapo) of the RSHA and had, moreover, been charged by Himmler with rounding up the Jews in all European countries in order to transfer them to Germany. Rumania's entrance into the war—which occurred at this time—had made a great impression on Eichmann. He had come to see me to ask about the military situation, since information was transmitted to me daily by the Hungarian War Ministry and also by the Commanding General of the Waffen-SS in Hungary. He expressed his belief that Germany had lost the war, and that consequently there was no more chance for him. He knew that he was regarded by the Allies as one of the top war criminals, as he had millions of Jewish lives on his conscience. I asked him the figure. He answered that this was a high state secret but that he was willing to disclose it to me, since these details were bound to interest me as an historian, and besides he did not expect to return from his mission to Rumania. He had recently drawn up a report for Himmler, who had wished to know the exact number of Jews exterminated. He summed up the figures as follows: 'Roughly four million Jews killed in various extermination camps. Two millions exterminated by other means —for the most part shot by action groups of the Security Police during the Russian campaign.'" (Affidavit of Wilhelm Höttl, dated November 28, 1945, prepared for the International Military Tribunal at Nuremberg.)

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saying that a large percentage of them will be eliminated by the natural death rate.

The survivors—who will inevitably be those with the greatest powers of resistance—will be treated in accordance with the logic of the situation. For history has shown that, once liberated, this natural elite would embody the germ of a new Jewish revival.

THE minutes of the proceedings before the International Military Tribunal at Nuremberg show that three months later this plan was confirmed by an explicit order from Himmler to Eichmann. The witness Wisliceny testified that he saw the confirming order with his own eyes, Eichmann having shown it to him.

The order itself has not yet been found. From the fact that it was classified as the German equivalent of "top secret" and that Eichmann made Wisliceny swear not to speak of it to anyone, the German attorneys for the defense attempted to prove that the SS, the SD, and their clients taken individually did not know the meaning of the words "definitive solution." The document reproduced above, which was unknown at the time of the Nuremberg trial, tends to prove the contrary.

In any event Eichmann was invested with unlimited powers, "independent of geographical frontiers." The Emperor Caligula is said to have cried out: "If only the Roman people had but one head, so that I might cut it off at a single blow!" Modern administrative techniques enabled Eichmann to realize Caligula's dream. Eichmann's role consisted of organizing the deportations to Poland from the various occupied countries. This work was carried on in his office at the RSHA in Berlin, and in the course of frequent trips to the occupied countries. Thus he was directly responsible for the deportation and death of 1,300,000 Jews.

Within Poland, he had no direct jurisdiction. Auschwitz was readily available and Gruppenführer Globocznik was quite equal to his task. However, in his capacity as chief of the Jewish section of the RSHA, Eichmann had a voice in drawing up general directives. In this sense his claim to having six million persons on his conscience was not an idle boast.

WHAT reactions, what changes take place in the mind of a man engaged in so strange and monstrous a task?

His behavior—as much as we know of it—was that of most criminals in all times and countries. First he surrounded himself with a group of lost souls, *missi dominici*, who traveled through the whole of Europe and rendered accounts to him alone: among these were: Dannecker (France, Bulgaria), Wisliceny (Slovakia, Hungary), Alois Brunner (Slovakia, France), the brothers Rolf and Hans Günther (Czechoslovakia), Novak, Hrosinek, Rahn, etc. All except Dannecker, Wisliceny, and the two Günthers were Austrians like himself. He insisted that members of his team should never leave it, not even to go to the front or to join the Waffen-SS: "We are all in the same boat, no one can leave it. For anyone working with me there is no return."

In the archives of the SD in Paris, there is a document that indicates the mentality of Eichmann's team. It is dated July 15, 1942—deportations from France were then in full swing—and is a report submitted by Röthke, liaison man between Dannecker and his chief. A transport from Bordeaux to Auschwitz had been scheduled; the German railway administration had provided the train—but the transport did not take place. Eichmann telephoned from Berlin to demand an explanation. Röthke tried to explain: "I replied that originally all those who wore the star were to be arrested, even in the provinces, but that then an agreement was made with the French government that only stateless Jews were liable to arrest. The train of July 15, 1942, had to be cancelled in view of the fact that, according to the information furnished by the SD in Bordeaux, there were only one hundred and fifty stateless Jews in that city. There was not sufficient time to make up the deficiency and one hundred and fifty Jews would not have sufficed to fill the train."

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Eichmann flew into a rage: "SS-Obersturmbannführer Eichmann reminded me that it was after all a question of prestige. It had been necessary to enter into laborious negotiations with the Reich Transportation Ministry. The negotiations had been successful, and here we were canceling a train in Paris. It was the first time such a thing had ever happened to him. It was a disgrace! He had no desire to inform SS-Obergruppenführer Müller for fear of compromising himself."

And here is the sanction with which Eichmann threatened the Paris SD: "He said he was obliged to consider whether France should not be dropped as a source of deportations."

To put it succinctly: if you don't do your work properly, I won't take the Jews off your hands in the future!

ONE of the few Jews who met Eichmann personally and came off with a whole skin was Rezso Kásztner, Hungarian journalist and Zionist leader. In 1944 Dr. Kásztner entered into an amazing game of poker with the Nazis. He suggested that if they stopped deportations he would procure for them certain amounts of foreign exchange and American merchandise. He kept up this bluff for an amazingly long time and actually succeeded in partially retarding the deportations. This is unquestionably one of the most astonishing chapters in the struggle of European Jewry for survival. Dr. Kásztner made the following entry in his notebooks under October 17, 1944; it gives us a close-up of Eichmann in his "professional" attitude. Regent Horthy had just been deposed after the failure of his attempt at a separate peace, and the Arrow Cross had taken power; Eichmann had just returned from Berlin by plane. "So you see I'm back. You thought it was going to be like in Rumania or in Bulgaria, didn't you? You've forgotten that Hungary is in the shadow of the Reich's ruins. And our arm is still long enough to reach the Hungarian Jews. Now listen to what I say: this government is taking orders from us. The Budapest Jews are going to be deported and they're going to be deported on foot. We need our transportation for other things. Or if you prefer, you can get us some trucks. . . . You're scared, eh? I've had enough of your American fairytales. Now we're going to get to work. And I expect to see things hum, get me?"

"At that moment he seemed to be the happiest man on earth," Dr. Kásztner observed.

IN HIS private life Eichmann, who had been a model husband and father, began to neglect his family. He entered into sentimental relationships, first of a passing nature, then more serious. In 1944, he became acquainted with Ingrid von Ihume in Budapest, and this aristocratic connection seems to have bewitched the petty-bourgeois Eichmann. He became a chain smoker and began to drink immoderately. He lived in continuous fear of assassination, ceased to use airplanes for his trips, kept two loaded sub-machine guns and a number of hand grenades in his car, and saw to it that his lodgings were under constant guard. He took the greatest care to avoid having his picture taken, and even had the photographs he needed for his official identification papers prepared in a special laboratory.

This is as much as we have been able to learn about the private life of Adolf Eichmann. Six million human lives on his conscience. One is tempted to seek some special grandeur in such wickedness. But has arithmetic any meaning here? Is there after all any great difference between Eichmann and the sons of Cain down through the ages: "And now thou art cursed from the earth, which hath opened her mouth to receive thy brother's blood from thy hand . . . a fugitive and a vagabond shalt thou be. . . ."

Eternal mystery of guilt and retribution. But beside it Eichmann presents another, lesser mystery: what has become of him personally?

SOME of his staff who fell into the hands of the Allied authorities have reported

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that, beginning in the fall of 1944, Eichmann, foreseeing an Allied victory, spoke of suicide. They state that he prepared poison for himself and his family. It is true that a good many Nazis chose this way out; but an even greater number contented themselves with speaking of it; obviously the mere fact that no trace of Eichmann has been found since the debacle is not much of an argument for the suicide thesis.

The last person known to have seen him is Sturmbannführer Willy Höttl, who met him at the beginning of May in Alt Aussee, Austria. It was in this little summer resort that Kaltenbrunner had set up his last headquarters: Eichmann had just arrived with almost his entire team; he believed, no doubt, that the chief of the SD intended to carry on the struggle and wanted to join him. But Kaltenbrunner refused to receive him and sent him orders to leave Alt Aussee. Eichmann then informed Höttl that, having provided his family with false papers, he was going to hide out in the mountains with his men.

Wisliceny recalls a conversation that took place in September 1944 between Eichmann and Standartenführer Plobel, commander of an extermination team in Poland. Considering the possibility of a German defeat, Eichmann was even then thinking of hiding out in the mountains of Lower Austria with his men, of forming a group of partisans "and waiting for the final conflict between East and West." This region where he had spent his childhood and where he had acquired a small estate in 1939 was his real home, and he thought he could count on the cooperation of the peasants. Thus there is evidence that he conceived this plan at an early date. But there is no positive ground for supposing that he succeeded in carrying it out.

We have already mentioned another hypothesis: profiting by his knowledge of Hebrew and of Jewish life in general, he may have passed as a Jew escaped from a concentration camp. Perhaps he is now in a displaced-persons camp, or he may even have succeeded in emigrating under his new identity, perhaps even to Palestine. It is known that a number of Germans attempted this stratagem at the time of the German defeat in France. Eichmann was in a position to supply himself with a thoroughly credible identity, and he had the knowledge required for an expert impersonation. Moreover, plastic surgery was widely practiced in Germany.

Still another possibility is that Eichmann merely assumed the identity of some harmless German, as others managed to do. As for his team, a few, like Dieter Wisliceny and Kurt Kecher, surrendered to the Allied authorities; Alois Brunner was captured by the Russians. Nothing is known of Dannecker, of the Günther brothers, or the others. This has made it more difficult to follow the trail of Eichmann, whose fate is still shrouded in perfect mystery.

ALL the materials in this article originate from the archives of the Centre de Documentation Juive Contemporaine in Paris. Most of the biographical details on Eichmann came from reports prepared in jail by SS Obersturmführer Dieter Wisliceny, condemned to death and executed in 1948 in Bratislava (Czechoslovakia).—L. P.

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HAS JUDAISM STILL POWER TO SPEAK?

A Religion for an Age of Crisis

WILL HERBERG

THE revival of creative theological thinking is generally recognized as one of the significant events in recent intellectual history. Theology, as we are beginning to learn, is not just a scholastic word-game of abstract system-making, remote from life. It has something to say, something directly relevant to the fearful predicament in which modern man finds himself. "The Christian account of human motivation," Arthur M. Schlesinger Jr. points out in commenting on a work of Reinhold Niebuhr, "is massive, subtle and intricate, and it throws light on certain present dilemmas which baffle liberalism or Marxism. Whatever you may say about Augustine, he would not have been much surprised by the outcome of the Russian Revolution."

In the past generation, Christian theology has made an impressive effort to rise to its proper task—which is to interpret life and history, man and the universe, in ultimate terms. Without rejecting the insights gained on other levels of analysis, it has striven to include and transcend them, to fuse them into a single *Weltanschauung* that can serve at once as the ultimate logic and dynamic of life.

But what about Jewish theology? We have long prided ourselves on being universally recognized as the People of the Book. What have we done to make the Book relevant to the perplexities of our age? What has been our response in terms of creative religious thinking, theological interpretation, or prophetic witness? What word has Judaism had for mankind in agony?

THE revival of Christian theology followed upon World War I, which put an end to the smug self-satisfaction of Western civilization and therewith to Western man's high illusions of approaching omnipotence and perfectibility. It may be said to date from that day in 1919 when Karl Barth stood in his little parish church in Safenwil, Switzerland, called upon to say something meaningful to a congregation still shattered by the impact of the war. He took up his Bible and preached. As he himself describes it, he was like a man who, uncertainly climbing the dark and winding staircase of a church tower, reaches for the bannister to steady himself, and gets hold of the bell-rope instead.

The echoes of that bell, which reached the world in the *Römerbrief* that same year, have not yet died down. The steady stream of writings that have come from Barth's pen in Switzerland, in Germany, and then in Switzerland again, have had an immense effect in

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AT A time when men of all faiths or no faith are seeking to understand the old bibles, and to write new ones, what of that people who gave the world the Bible, and who claim and are recognized to have a special genius for the religious? Everywhere the evidence becomes more and more abundant that we are witnessing in our time a religious revival—or at least a revival of interest in religion on the level of ideas, i.e., theology. What is not nearly so obvious or well known is the specific content of this quickened theological interest—the dominating themes with which it is concerned and the different way in which these themes are handled by the various religious traditions and groupings. WILL HERBERG here sketches in broad strokes the development of this specifically modern reaction to the eternal issues, concerning himself especially with appraising the contribution that Jewish thinkers are at present making to the new movement. Mr. Herberg's previous contributions to COMMENTARY ("From Marxism to Judaism," January 1947, and "Assimilation in Militant Dress," July 1947) provoked wide discussion and comment. Mr. Herberg was born in New York in 1906 and was graduated from Columbia University. He is now writing a book on Jewish theology.

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reshaping religious thinking on the Continent, in Britain, and in America. From Switzerland too has come the voice of Emil Brunner, the Zürich theologian, whose systematic works have had an even greater direct influence in the English-speaking world. Barth and Brunner are neo-Reformation theologians—that is, their work is primarily a reinterpretation of the Reformation tradition of Luther, Calvin, and Zwingli. Originally closely identified, they have now developed important and perhaps crucial differences. Both have found partisans and followers throughout Protestant Europe and America.

Concurrently, significant new trends have also appeared in the Roman Catholic and Eastern Orthodox communions. The Catholic revival in France predates somewhat the First World War but its major contributions fall in the postwar period, and the reworking of Thomism in contemporary terms, in particular the development of the idea of Christian Personalism, is linked with the name of Jacques Maritain. The intellectual renaissance in Eastern Orthodoxy is limited to a handful of Russian thinkers living in exile (the late Nicholas Berdyaev was perhaps best known), but is none the less brilliant for that.

In the United States, neo-Reformation theology has found its exponents among men like Reinhold Niebuhr, H. Richard Niebuhr, Paul Tillich (in this country since 1933), Robert L. Calhoun, and John C. Bennett. What they have had to say has perhaps had more meaning for Americans, so obviously is it cast in terms of our own experience.

Most characteristic of all these theologians, Catholic, Protestant, and Orthodox, is the immediate bearing of their teaching upon the fundamental problems of life. These men are very far from being the cloistered recluses theologians are popularly supposed to be; they are actively and deeply concerned with the world and the affairs of men. Their work is permeated with a profound sense of contemporaneity.

The one unifying motive in neo-Reformation theology has been the effort to find a "third way," a way free from the inadequacies of old-line fundamentalism and latter-day modernism. This third way, it has been felt, is to be gained not by eclectic compromise but by achieving a fresh synthesis of Reformation thought which would turn the insights of scriptural religion to bear upon life, human nature, and history.

Protestant neo-orthodoxy, as it has come to be known, thus begins with a double rejection from which it proceeds to a strong affirmation. Neither rationalism nor mysticism: dialectic theology—this is the first of its affirmations. The pretensions of reason to answer the ultimate questions of life are challenged. At the very most, Brunner says, reason is able to point to the transcendent reality, but it can never, unaided, apprehend or establish relations with it. (Barth is unwilling even to make that concession to human reason in the field of religion.) But if reason is challenged, so is mysticism, which claims immediate apprehension of the absolute and ultimate union with it. As against both rationalism and mysticism, these theologians take what has been called an "existentialist" position: *faith is decision*. Dialectic theology sees the thinker first of all as a man who has to make practical decisions in life, and among these decisions the most crucial is the one by which he stakes his life on his affirmation of God—it is a portentous "wager." "The truth concerns me infinitely now," said the early Barth, recalling Kierkegaard, and although Barth later abandoned the term itself, existentialist thinking remains basic to the best in neo-Reformation Protestantism. Out of the existential decision—out of the divine-human encounter in which man confronts God across the abyss which separates the human from the divine—is generated the tension of spiritual life. Neither reason nor mystic union can resolve it, in spite of their sweeping claims. Such tension is ultimately expressible only in paradox, which Reinhold Niebuhr defines as "a rational understanding of the limits of rationality, . . . an expression of faith that a rationally irresolvable contradiction may point to a truth which logic cannot contain."

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THE new Protestantism recognizes the service liberal theology has rendered in breaking the grip of a sterile fundamentalism, but it maintains that liberalism has been unable to meet the test. Theological liberalism —so runs the indictment—has systematically striven to break the tension that is the spring of spiritual energy by affirming the continuity of God with man instead of the "otherness" of God; by preaching an unwarranted confidence in the powers of human reason despite its clear limitations and corruptions; by insisting on the "innate" goodness of man and the essential unreality of sin and evil; by looking for the gradual realization of the Kingdom of Heaven in the course of social progress. Liberal theology is accused of having merely sanctified the relative standards of secular bourgeois society and having served as a sounding board for its prejudices, even to the point of virtually discarding the Bible except as "inspirational reading" or "great literature." In short, liberalism in theology has been a near-secular cult of "adjustment" and "peace of mind" at a time when these are counsels of spiritual death.

Against all this, the new theology takes Scripture seriously, though—and here it breaks with fundamentalism—not always literally. (How the Bible can be understood as revelation without danger of falling into bibliolatry is given profound theoretical treatment in Brunner's *Revelation and Reason* and H. Richard Niebuhr's *The Meaning of Revelation.*) It reaffirms Kierkegaard's insistence on the "eternal qualitative difference between God and man." "The favorite preposition of liberal theology is *within*," H. Richard Niebuhr comments acutely, "that of post-liberal theology, *over against.*"

This radical distinction makes possible a fresh appreciation of the meaning of sin and evil in human life, which has become, perhaps, the most familiar aspect of the new theology. The inordinate pretensions of the human spirit, man's efforts to deny and overpass his creatureliness—his pride, his egocentricity, deep-rooted tendency of each person to make himself instead of God the center of his universe—reflects the radical sinfulness of human nature ("original sin"). It is the other side to man's undoubted capacity for self-transcendence in reason, imagination, and moral freedom, and constitutes both a limitation and source of corruption of that capacity. In Reinhold Niebuhr's work we see excitingly described the insidious ways in which all motives, even the basest, are idealized, and all ideals, even the purest, are in fact compounded with the self-interest of those who promote them. It is a perspective capable of assimilating the best of Marx and Freud.

THE new theology is preeminently a crisis theology. It was born in a time of crisis; it reflects the contemporary crisis of society; it expresses the permanent crisis in which man finds himself in this world.

Crisis here means the perennial plight of man, who, like Kafka's K., sees the goal, is driven to motion, yet cannot find the way—who desperately needs the truth, strains to attain it, yet can never be sure that he has reached it. But crisis also means judgment (Greek: *krisis*)—the divine judgment under which man and all his enterprises stand. "The worst sin in man," says Kierkegaard, "is self-assurance, the source of which lies in man's lack of realism in facing himself."

The Kingdom of God, as the neo-Reformation theologians conceive it, can never be simply identified with historical "progress." It always transcends and stands "over against" history, yet is always relevant to it as judgment and fulfilment. More, the power of the Kingdom breaks through into human existence. Every one of our achievements, it is true, is ambiguous; but each achievement nevertheless contains a genuine "hint" of the Kingdom. This is the source of the moral dynamic which makes possible working *within time* to speed the "grand consummation at the end of time." The final elimination of evil, it is recognized, is not possible in the life of man—"Perfection is an eschatological conception, an 'impossible possibility,'" says Paul Tillich—but, under judgment of God, man must never rest so long as there is evil in the world, while at the same time he must never

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permit himself to be deceived as to the quality of his achievement. Here we have a "utopianism" that can resist corruption, a theologically grounded social activism that can actually face and deal with reality.

Neo-Reformation theology is neither absolutist nor relativist in the usual sense; it holds to what may be called a God-centered relativism. Only God is absolute; everything else —literally everything, every idea, institution, or movement—is infected with relativity, for there can be no human situation that does not stand under the judgment of God. Once we confess and acknowledge God, Barth says, everything which is not God is "criticized, limited, made relative," and absolutizing the relative is idolatry. Such radical depreciation of everything short of God once drove Karl Barth to the utter devaluation of the world of nature and culture. It was this that led to his separation from Emil Brunner in the early 1930's. With the mounting European crisis and the war, Barth's attitude underwent a change, signified by his militant anti-Nazism. Apparently, however, the change was not a permanent one, for the same almost nihilistic tendency is to be detected again in his present-day attitude of unconcern for the fate of Western civilization as against Soviet Communism. Tillich was quite right, it would seem, when as far back as 1935, he criticized Barth's special type of dialectic theology in the following terms:

"When I am asked, what is wrong with the 'dialectic' theology, I reply that it is not 'dialectic.' A dialectic theology is one in which 'yes' and 'no' belong inseparably together. In the so-called 'dialectic' theology, they are irreconcilably separated. . . ."

Brunner, the Niebuhrs, and Tillich himself—each in his own way—has been able to maintain the dialectic tension so that the relativization of everything under God has not meant a turning aside from life and history, but rather the achievement of a standpoint from which both may be apprehended and dealt with. A relativism rooted in the absolute is the hallmark of neo-Reformation theology. It makes evident the tragic dimension of life for it does not hide the degree to which man's best aspirations are corrupted in his own soul and imperiled in the world. But it points beyond tragedy and despair—to the coming of the Kingdom, to the realization of the "impossible possibility."

THE work of William Temple, the late Archbishop of Canterbury and easily the most distinguished Anglican theologian of recent times, may be conceived as an effective absorption of central neo-Reformation insights into the main body of Anglican tradition. His chief importance lies, perhaps, in his effort to work out a Christian social ethic that will be relevant to the times and yet refrain from identifying the church with any particular social program. His work in connection with the Malvern Conference (1941), in which he was the leading spirit, and his popular Penguin brochure, *Christianity and Social Order*, have made his point of view well known among large numbers in Britain and America.

The Catholic Humanism (or Personalism) of Jacques Maritain stresses the eminent dignity of the human person as a spiritual being and his transcendence over the total claims of society. It is rooted in the doctrine of "theocentric humanism," which Maritain finds in St. Thomas and which he opposes to the "anthropocentric humanism" that he asserts has brought contemporary civilization to the brink of disaster. He has had to contend with powerful resistance in Catholic ranks, for neither humanism nor personalism has ever been much stressed by the Church. Indeed, one gets the impression that what Maritain is attempting to do is to recapture a side of St. Thomas' teaching which has been rather consistently ignored since the 13th century. Closely linked with Maritain's thought is the Catholic existentialism of Gabriel Marcel and other French writers. Maritain himself has lately contended that St. Thomas' "philosophy of being" is existentialist in the true sense of the term.

The two leading Eastern Orthodox thinkers—Berdyaev and Father Bulgakov—were both Marxists to start with and have retained

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their social radicalism as part of their theology. Reflecting the diverse influences of Kant, Dostoevsky, Marx, and the mystic Jacob Boehme, Berdyaev has developed, in a series of works—the best known of which is, perhaps, *Slavery and Freedom*—a personal theology widely different from Western patterns and rooted in the Russian Orthodox tradition. He is par excellence the philosopher of freedom, of free creativity. He condemns all types of *objectification*—that is, depersonalization—of man through institutions, organizations, laws, rites, or dogmas. In place of such "enslavement," Berdyaev calls for the free communion of love. His social philosophy is indeed one of Christian anarchism or personalist socialism, which recognizes the necessity of a certain degree of economic collectivism but categorically rejects the collectivization of any other aspect of life.

Bulgakov has sketched his own development "From Marxism to Sophiology" in an article under that title in the *Review of Religion* for May 1937. His criticism of Marxism is acute and realistic. His own "Christian humanism" or "social Christianity" is rooted in the Orthodox concept of *sobornost*, or free union, which brings him close to Berdyaev's sphere of thought. Both opposed the Bolshevik Revolution and were driven from Russia, but both regard the revolution as the perversion of a profoundly true idea and as punishment for the fearful sins of pre-revolutionary church and society. Berdyaev particularly is a firm believer in the Orthodox idea of the universalist-messianic mission of Russia: it is in Russia that "the way is being prepared . . . for the new Jerusalem of community and the brotherhood of man."

Virtually all the important figures in the renewal of Christian theology—Karl Barth, Emil Brunner, Reinhold and Richard Niebuhr, Paul Tillich, Jacques Maritain, William Temple, Nicolas Berdyaev, and Father Bulgakov—are to be classified as social radicals in the sense of being anti-capitalist and anti-totalitarian in their understanding of the Christian social imperative.

Indeed many of the leaders in the new theological movement took active part in the European resistance. As Horton (*Contemporary Continental Theology*) pointed out in 1938, "for a liberal Protestant, prepared to admit the reality of contemporary natural knowledge of God, it is a delicate question where to draw the line between the true and the false in this contemporary German [Nazi] sense of God. Not so for Karl Barth. He stands over against this in complete prophetic opposition, like Amos at Bethel or Elijah at Mount Carmel. . . . He calls upon all faithful Christians to take to the catacombs rather than bow the knee to the new Baal." To Barth and those who, after much hesitation, followed him in the German Confessional Church, to the church in Holland and Norway, the crisis of Hitlerism was no mere political, economic, or cultural crisis. It was a religious crisis: it was man deifying himself, man establishing the God-state. That is why men who had never shown any interest in politics suddenly became rebels, why quiet, respectable citizens did not shrink from martyrdom. At that moment of crisis, the new theology became a force in history.

IN A very profound sense, what goes by the name of the "crisis of our time" is a Jewish crisis. Not only has it brought frightful disaster to millions of Jews on the European continent; what is perhaps more significant, the fate of the Jew has become essentially typical of the fate of contemporary man. The demonic evil and unreason which mankind loosed upon itself in the course of the past generation found in the Jew its first and chosen victim: anti-Semitism has established itself as the projection of the deepest impulses of human sinfulness. In the Jew, the archetype of the outsider standing forever at the brink of nothingness, the alienation of contemporary man, his malaise and homelessness in the world, find their most intense expression.

Immediately after the First World War, a brilliant renaissance of Jewish thinking, ripened in the previous decade, came to fruition in Germany. Jewish religious existentialism, linked with the names of Martin Buber and Franz Rosenzweig, and in a sense

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too with that of Hermann Cohen, the great neo-Kantian philosopher, was born. In his *Religion of Reason from the Sources of Judaism,* published immediately after his death in 1918, Cohen had already, as Franz Rosenzweig was quick to see, transcended the abstract rationality of the academic tradition and achieved an essentially existentialist position.

It was Martin Buber, however, who developed the "new thinking" in a way that made it an immediate power in Western culture. Buber is probably the greatest religious existentialist thinker since Sören Kierkegaard; his philosophico-theological achievement is immense—his *I and Thou* is already an acknowledged classic—and his effect on contemporary thought deep and far-reaching. His affinities with neo-Reformation thought on the one hand and with Berdyaev's personalist approach on the other—so complex and manysided is his thinking—have made him a powerful germinal force in contemporary theology, much more perhaps outside than within the limits of the Jewish community.

The central idea of Buber's thought is given in his celebrated distinction between the two primary attitudes, the two orders of living, the two fundamental types of relation, of which man is capable: I-Thou (person-to-person) and I-It (person-to-thing). Through the I-Thou encounter emerges the primary reality of the spiritual life: neither the I nor the Thou, says Buber, is ultimately real but the I-Thou meeting, the "between-man-and-man." The person—the "single-one"—is born of the I-Thou encounter: without a Thou there can be no I.

Yet man's attitude cannot possibly be cast permanently in the I-Thou relation. To survive, he must know and *use* things—and it is the intrinsic tragedy of life that he is only too often driven to treat persons as things. "Without It man cannot live. But he who lives with It alone is not a man."

To Buber, in his thoroughgoing existentialism, man's freedom is decision. "The man who thinks existentially," he says, "is the man who stakes his life on his thinking." It is through the decision of faith, upon which man does indeed stake his whole life, that in the last analysis he gains his freedom and becomes a person, a "single-one."

Though in his view, personality is generated out of the I-Thou relation and is therefore not ultimate in the sense of many radical individualists, Buber is insistent in his personalist emphasis. "Man can have dealings with God only as a single-one," he repeats. "The individual human person is unique and irreplaceable." Because of his personalist emphasis, Buber feels compelled to set limits to mysticism, which he has valued highly and to which he was personally attracted; it is communion, not union, with God that is the proper goal. He rejects too the rationalism that thinks it can "comprehend" God in an intellectual formula. "God may be addressed, not expressed," is Buber's profound insight. God as the transcendent Thou in the ultimate I-Thou encounter is, of course, "wholly other," as the Barthians have stressed; but he is also "wholly present." Buber, in the authentic Jewish tradition, refuses to suppress either the transcendence or the "hereness" of God.

BUBER's ethic is rooted in his I-Thou philosophy. Evil in human relations is the conversion of the "other" from a Thou into an It—objectification or depersonalization, in Berdyaev's terminology—the utilization of a person as a means to an external end, in Kant's. Thus, Buber, like the neo-Reformation thinkers, finds the root source of human sin in the making absolute of the self. As against this, there is the self-giving love of a genuine I-Thou relation. Such love does not mean the suppression of self: "It is not the I that is given up, but the false self-asserting instinct. . . . There is no self-love that is not self-deceit . . . but without being and remaining one's self, there is no love."

In his social philosophy, Buber, like Berdyaev, sharply counterposes the free community "resting on self and self-responsibility" to the collectivity in which every person is institutionalized and turned into an

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It. In true community, he teaches, just as in true love for the "other," God enters as a "third": "The true community does not arise through people having feelings for one another (though indeed not without it), but through first, their taking their stand in living mutual relation with a living Center, and second, their being in living mutual relation with one another." He defines an important aspect of his social philosophy in a very telling polemic against Carl Schmitt and Friedrich Gogarten, who try to exploit a one-sided doctrine of the utter depravity of man to justify the authoritarian state. Buber eloquently vindicates individual man against the total claims of state and society. Man he sees as "essentially" neither good nor evil nor simply the indeterminate possibility of either, but in the most precise sense of the words, both-good-and-evil, "good and evil together." Only as against God can radical evil be ascribed to man, he insists, "because God is God and man is man and the distance between them is absolute."

This feeling for tension in the human situation appears strikingly in Buber's interpretation of the Messianic vision. "Redemption," he says, "occurs forever and none has ever occurred": the Kingdom of God is here among us as a power and a summons and yet always remains as the promise of fulfilment at the "end of days." Out of this polarity of the "already" and the "not-yet" is generated the dynamic of spiritual life. Buber, too, grounds his theology of social action—he is, of course, a convinced socialist—in his eschatology. "What he seeks," Ernst Simon points out, "is the 'demarcation-line' between the unconditional demand and the always only conditional realization."

Buber does see the possibility of a really "organic" community in which a We is formed through a complex of person-to-person associations. Such an organic community, he believes, was exemplified in the Hasidic movement, at least in its best days. Hasidism he regards as one of the great spiritual achievements of Israel, along with Prophetism and early Christianity—and Zionism too, the Zionism of the *halutzim*, who strove for the realization of the spiritual potentialities of Judaism. Buber's Zionism is linked with his conception of Israel. Israel is not just one of the "nations of the world": it is "something unique, unclassifiable, a community that cannot be grasped in the categories of ethnology and sociology." Israel is the people of spiritual creativity: "Salvation comes from the Jews; the fundamental tendencies of Judaism are the elements from which a new gospel for the world is always elaborated."

With Buber stands Franz Rosenzweig. Rosenzweig's tragic yet triumphant life—he died in 1929 at the age of 43 after eight years of an encroaching paralysis that finally deprived him even of the power of speech—constitutes a moving experience. His writings—*The Star of Redemption*, his one complete work; his shorter pieces and his letters—reflect a profound and penetrating intellect, in its very texture existentialist; it is humiliating to note that almost none of his writings has yet appeared in English.*

Having reached his existentialist position after a hard struggle with an idealist heritage, Rosenzweig traced, in life as well as in thought, the road that leads "from unimportant truths of the type 'twice two equals four,' to which men lightly assent, . . . through the truths for which a man is willing to pay something, on to those which he cannot prove true except with the sacrifice of his life and finally to those the truth of which can be proved only by the staking of the lives of all the generations." I say in life as well as in thought, for Rosenzweig's life—his existential decision for Judaism at the very moment when he was ready for conversion to Christianity—was precisely such a "wager" with destiny.

Rosenzweig too saw the ultimate reality in the I-Thou encounter, in "speaking and answering." The metaphysic of speech became a salient part of his philosophy: in a significant sense, his and Buber's translation

*A volume including a biography of Franz Rosenzweig and an anthology of his writings, prepared by N. N. Glatzer, is soon to be published by Schocken Books.

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of Scripture into German—or rather "retranslation of Holy Script into Holy Word"—was a work of theology, of an inwardly working theology of the word. His whole system, as elaborated in that strange work, *The Star of Redemption,* is based on a series of "correlations" between the primary elements of ultimate reality—God, man, and world—to which the divine-human encounter is crucial.

The "mystery of Israel" obsessed Rosenzweig, the passionate "life-thinker." For him, as for Buber, "salvation comes from the Jews." Judaism is the "eternal fire," Christianity, the "eternal rays"; Judaism, the "eternal life," Christianity, the "eternal way." While Israel stays with God, the Christian is sent out to conquer the unredeemed world. But he is always in danger of relapsing into paganism and when he does, when the pagan within him rises in revolt against the yoke of the Cross, he vents his fury on the Jew; that is the "secret" of anti-Semitism. "The fact of anti-Semitism, age-old and ever-present though totally groundless," Rosenzweig wrote to his mother, "can be understood only by the different functions which God has assigned to the two communities—Israel to represent in time the eternal Kingdom of God, Christianity to bring itself and the world toward that goal." Only when that goal is reached—at the "end of time"—will the final reconciliation and fusion take place; then all will indeed be one in the recognition of the unity of the Divine Name.

The time of Buber and Rosenzweig boasted of other names as well. There is Gershom Scholem, in whose scholarly studies of Jewish mysticism, suggestions of rich theological ideas may be perceived. In his writings on the "essence of Judaism," Leo Baeck has given the "liberal" viewpoint a new depth and power. And then there was Franz Kafka.

Perhaps in the current deluge of Kafka exegesis it is necessary to insist that Kafka was after all a creative artist, not a theologian. Yet it is not to be denied that, on the level of interpretation at least, *The Castle* is a powerful theological myth of man's search for salvation in a world marked, in Buber's words, by a "special human homelessness and solitude," while *The Trial* is an imaginatively projected study of human guilt and divine judgment. Nor will the perceptive reader fail to note the relevance of many of Kafka's episodes and symbols to the "mystery of Israel," to the position of the Jew in the world. However one may differ on interpretation—and no interpretation of a great creative artist can ever be final or exhaustive—I do not think it can any longer be denied that Franz Kafka was a religious thinker of a stature we are only now beginning to appreciate.

THE ardent intellectual life of German Jewry did not cease with the triumph of Hitler. If anything, it grew more intense, for now it began to search for the meaning of the awful catastrophe that was overwhelming it. But the end came all too soon and the voice of German Jewry was silenced.

The center now shifted to Jewish Palestine. There an immense cultural work was going forward. Hebrew was being reborn as a living language; a rich literature was springing up, scholarly work of all sorts was being energetically prosecuted. But aside from the recent German immigration, only two figures seem to have made themselves felt as creative religious forces in the course of the past generation, Chief Rabbi Abraham Isaac Kuk and Dr. Judah L. Magnes.

Dr. Magnes was no theologian in the narrower sense of the term, but his pronouncements through the passing years had a genuine prophetic ring. In a cowardly age, he spoke out and no opposition or abuse was ever able to silence him. But what is perhaps most important, he spoke and thought in thoroughly religious terms. It is a great pity that so many have allowed factional heat or differences on what are, after all, secondary questions to obscure their appreciation of this great man. Rabbi Kuk infused the age-old Orthodox tradition with new energy. His writings are the reflection of a life of genuine sanctity and gain much of their power therefrom. His personal influence was perhaps even more potent than his writings; he has left a deep and lasting impression

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on important sections of the new Palestine.

Aside from these men, what Palestine has to show is hardly impressive. But how much less impressive is the picture presented by the United States, this land where lives the bulk of modern Jewry! It is true that the heritage of Solomon Schechter has been developed in new directions by such independent thinkers as Louis Finkelstein and Max Kadushin. It is true that Samuel S. Cohon has for more than a quarter of a century pursued serious theological work in the Reform-liberal tradition. It is true, too, that Reconstructionism, the creation of Mordecai M. Kaplan, has a notable achievement to its credit: it has evolved the only relevant "philosophy" of our Jewish existence in America. Its theology, however, still retains far too much of naturalism and pragmatic humanism so that it is always in peril of passing over into sociology on the one side or collapsing into mere ethical sentiment on the other.

Beyond this, what American Jews have to show in the way of theology and religious thinking is hardly more than routine reiteration of inherited formulas, Orthodox or modernist, the ostentatious parading of platitudes, the anxious effort to identify Judaism with the latest version of the "American way of life"—plus one or two less useful popularizations. The whole story is told when we note that the largest Jewish community in the world—numerous, active, and prosperous, involved in so many Jewish enterprises—does not possess one single significant journal of Jewish theology.

THE fact is that neither the world catastrophe nor the Jewish disaster, with which it is so inseparably linked, has evoked any creative response on the part of present-day Judaism. The age of Buber and Rosenzweig, with all its achievement and promise, must be recognized as hardly more than an isolated episode in the almost unrelieved mediocrity of Jewish religious thinking in recent decades.

Is it primarily the desperate insecurity of Jewish existence during the past thirty years that is responsible, as so many have suggested? Has preoccupation with mere survival absorbed so much of Jewish energy as to leave little or none for reflective thought transcending the moment? Insecurity and disaster are nothing new in the history of Israel, but never in the past did they paralyze the sources of spiritual creativity. On the contrary, every great achievement in Jewish religious thought came into being in response to crisis.

Nor can the inadequacy of the Jewish theological response be attributed to the alleged anti-theological bias in Jewish religious tradition. This alleged aversion to theology is, to a large extent, nothing but a latter-day fiction. If theology is understood in terms more comprehensive than scholastic system-making, Jewish thought has almost always—at least until recently—been theological. From the scriptural writers and Prophets to Rosenzweig and Buber, Jewish thinking has been a continuing effort to interpret problems and events in terms of the divine-human encounter and the working-out of God's providence.

The renunciation of theology in modern times is not so much a continuation of Jewish tradition as a more or less definite break with it, although it must be said that there are aspects of the tradition itself that have made this break possible.

This abrupt break with tradition reflects the belated entrance of the Jews into the modern world. For the great mass of Jews in Eastern Europe, there was no Renaissance; within one or two generations, they passed directly from the Middle Ages into modern secularism. For all its great cultural achievements, Emancipation brought confusion and disorientation from which Jewry has not yet recovered. In the rout of traditional Judaism, the very notion of religious thinking was all but lost. More, in the self-hatred that this period of demoralization bred, theology was rejected not only because it was theology but also, and perhaps primarily, because it was *Jewish*, because it bore the ghetto-stigma of Jewishness.

The metaphysical climate of opinion has changed drastically since those days but the after-affects are still strong.

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THE religious tradition itself has not been entirely unambiguous. The polarity of Jewish religion has been noted more than once in the past. Over fifty years ago (1893), Ahad Ha-Am wrote his penetrating essay, "Priest and Prophet," in which he pointed out the reciprocal relation between the two contrasting types of Jewish spirituality. At one pole is the prophet, standing outside the sinning community—"over against" it, in fact —to denounce its evil ways. He is "a man of strife and of contention to the whole earth." But he is also—and for that very reason—the inspired agent of crisis-creativity, the spiritual pioneer who conquers new frontiers of religious understanding. Very different is the priest. The priest, in Ahad Ha-Am's words, "appears on the scene at a time when prophecy has already succeeded in hewing out a path for its idea." His task is not spiritual pioneering but everyday normalization, cultivating the ground gained by the prophet and reducing it to order. He is the respectable man standing at the head of—"within" —the respectable community to guide and rule it. "The idea of the prophet produces the teaching of the priest," but it is a teaching that no longer has the urgency and utter immediacy of the prophetic message.

Essential Jewish tradition takes as normative *both* prophet and priest, or rather the tension between them. It is a tension that manifests itself, not so much in the succession of historical epochs with varying emphasis, as in an ambivalence within each historical period and even within each genuine spiritual leader. But there is ever the besetting temptation to reduce the polarity to the one-sided routine of priestly "normalcy," thus draining Jewish spirituality of its originating force. Rabbinism was born out of the Pharisaic movement, which was clearly a prophetic protest against priestly superficiality and laxness, and many of the finest examples of post-scriptural prophetism are to be found in rabbinical ranks. Yet Rabbinism too, as Ahad Ha-Am indicates, only too often tended to lose its prophetic spirit and sink to the level of priestly routine.

For many generations now, priestly "normalcy" has been taken as the true spirit of Jewish religion and every suggestion of prophetic urgency impatiently brushed aside. A hidden "liberalism" permeates and enfeebles conventional Jewish religion, even the most orthodox. Judaism, we are assured, is not a crisis-religion but an affair of "everyday normal life." Yet if there is one religion in the world that owes everything to crisis, it is Judaism. Judaism was born out of crisis; Israel is the crisis-people par excellence. In tradition, it is the great crisis of the Exodus that is the central point of reference for everything Jewish. The crisis culminating in the fall of the two kingdoms and the captivity served as the background for the prophetic movement. The crisis under the Hasmoneans gave birth to Pharisaism. The crisis following the destruction of the Temple witnessed the far-reaching reconstruction of Judaism by Johanan ben Zakkai. Where is there another record of crisis so unrelieved and so continuous as that contained in the historical books of Scripture or indeed in the entire body of Jewish history?

JEWISH existence itself is caught up in an inescapable ambiguity: is it ethnic or is it religious? Ideally, it is both, reflecting the universal and particularist components in the pattern of Jewish destiny. But this polarity too has been broken and reduced to a one-sided falsification, in the form either of old-line Reform Judaism or of secular nationalism.

The non-Jew striving to achieve a more profound, more significant spiritual orientation can do so only in religious, and usually only in specifically Christian, terms; the "scientific," aesthetic, and sociological cults of yesterday no longer have much appeal. The Jew too strives to affirm himself, but unlike the Gentile, he can affirm himself as Jew, at least up to a certain point, entirely in non-religious terms. To be a "good Jew"—how ambiguous is the phrase!—he need not affirm the religious tradition of Israel; he can be a fervent Zionist, an ardent Hebraist or Yiddishist, or a valiant fighter against anti-Semitism. Corresponding to the Christian affirma-

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tion of the non-Jew, there is, for the Jew, not merely Judaism or Jewish religion; there are also the *ersatz*-Jewish faiths—Jewish nationalism, culture, social service, "anti-defamation"—all moving on the secular level, all unable or unwilling to break through to the religious.

Now all of these things—nationalism, culture, social service, "anti-defamation"—are fine things, worthy things, *in their place.* It is only when they make pretensions to absoluteness as *total* affirmations—it is only when, as I have said, they present themselves as *ersatz*-Jewish faiths in place of Jewish religion, rather than subordinate to it—that they become mischievous. To mistake the part for the whole, the relative for the absolute, is surely the most dangerous pitfall in spiritual life.

This atmosphere is so pervasive that it affects even those who sincerely believe themselves free from it. They too—rabbis, scholars, and theologians—make their interpretations and judgments, do their thinking, in wholly non-religious terms. It simply never occurs to them to make what they preach really and deeply relevant to the crucial problems of modern life; aside from a few platitudes, they have nothing to say that is not better said by the psychologist, sociologist, or political leader.

By the logic of compensation, it is precisely this failure that has given the *ersatz*-Jewish faiths, especially Zionist nationalism, the opportunity to claim with a great deal of cogency that it is they who are exercising the prophetic function, they who are saying the new and meaningful word. And in some sense they are—particularly in contrast to the sluggish mediocrity of conventional Jewish religion. But in the final analysis, it is merely a pseudo-prophetism.

It cannot remain so. It cannot be that Judaism has spent its force, that the ancient People of the Book possesses no religious, no theological, no prophetic word for our time. Perhaps events under way today may bring about a drastic change and release the creative forces of Jewish spirituality. But until then the matter must remain in the problematic form given to it by Dr. Magnes: "Has Judaism still the power to speak in these days of mankind's crisis?"

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GOLDEN DAYS

A Story

ELIOT L. WAGNER

JESSE squatted in the front room, surrounded by parts of the radio he was trying to repair. He worked rapidly; he was due at the pushcart to relieve his father for breakfast. A New York Central train roared by outside, submerging the swell of noise from the public market on Park Avenue.

The train passed and he heard his mother entering the room.

He looked up and saw a dubious expression on her round heavy face.

"Stick with me, Ma, stick with me."

She looked at the scattered parts of the radio and shook her head. "Well," she said, "so it was busted anyway."

But in the kitchen, a few minutes later, she was surprised to hear dance music. She wiped her hands on her apron, and returned to the front room. Jesse was dancing, his right arm crooked, holding nobody. He was sixteen, auburn-haired and good-looking—but his slightness made him seem two or three years younger.

"Dancing with Miss Maxine?" said his mother. "She looks nice today, only a little undernourished."

Jesse turned quickly, dropping his arms, "Why don't you lay off the sarcasm for a change?"

"Don't be so fresh," his mother said, "and it's time for you to go relieve Papa."

"All right, all right! In a second, will ya!"

He was alone again. Never said anything about the radio being fixed, only the same old. . . . Yes, the song reminded him of Maxine:

Heaven is in your eyes,
Just like the stars we're under. . . .

She had once danced with him, but she would never dance with him again.

Everything was going wrong since the end of high school two months before. Maxine. No job. College: his parents telling him that if he wanted to go so badly, he could—at night; they had spent their good years bringing him up, and now it was his turn; he could work, like his sister.

If there were someone to turn to. . . .

FOR part of a night he had thought he had found someone, in Maxine. There was a dance in the public school gymnasium. Jesse had gone first to Maxine's house, but she wasn't there. He had been doing that for months: passing her stoop as if by accident. If he found her, she didn't object to his presence. She would say little, crooning the words of popular songs as he talked. From her house, that evening, he wandered to the school yard, where boys and girls were milling around outside, shrieking, giggling, and shouting. Maxine was leaning against an iron fence near the entrance, flanked by three boys arguing who was to take her in. As Jesse approached, he heard her say, "Now the three of you can fight it out all night long if you want to." And she linked her arm with his and said, "I'm going in with Jesse."

Was it true? She was in his arms, and they were dancing. He breathed in her fragrance, and through her blouse felt the warm firmness of her body.

Between sets the gym was cleared, and they stood together outside. Maxine kept glancing from one boy to another.

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"Looking for someone?" Jesse asked.

She laughed and shrugged. But she continued to look.

He tried to talk with her, to tell her about how he wanted to go to college and become an engineer. Maxine replied:

Sometimes I wonder why
I spend my lonely nights,
Dreaming of a song. . . .

He sang along with her, satisfied to have her near him, with her long, blonde hair, her narrow, pretty face and slender neck, the low-cut collar of her pink blouse, her swelling breasts beneath it. She was several months younger than he, but a half-inch taller.

The music began, and they went in and danced again. Jesse was embarrassed a little by Maxine's indifference, but it was soon over.

Walking slowly toward home along Lexington Avenue, Maxine suggested a soda at one of the drug stores.

"No, let's not go in there," said Jesse, who had no money. "It's too hot."

"Oh?" answered Maxine. Her tone seemed to require a substitute for the soda.

"Let's go to the park," said Jesse.

She shrugged.

When they reached Central Park the surface of the lake was ruffled by a cool breeze. A few boats were still out and there was a faint plashing of oars.

They wandered away from the lake. Suddenly, Maxine stopped singing. "What a beautiful night it is," she exclaimed, and sat down on the grass. Jesse, wearing his only good pants, hesitated, but he joined her quickly enough. He took her hand, his heart pounding. She said nothing, and he gazed up at the pale curve of her cheek. Suddenly he became bold, and kissed her. She put her arm around him before he could move away, and holding him tightly to her, pressed her lips against his. She released him, and he heard her breathing hard for a moment. He tried to kiss her again, but she evaded him, and rose. He followed.

"What's wrong?" he asked.

"Nothing," she said, smiling.

He held her hand, and they walked toward home. She sang:

You were in my arms,
A paradise where love was new. . . .

And then she withdrew her hand, saying, "Let's not hold hands. It's childish."

"Childish?" Jesse exclaimed. "What's childish about it?"

Maxine sang:

Though I dream in vain,
In my heart it will remain. . . .

"Can't you stop singing for a minute, and answer me?" Jesse demanded.

She tilted her jaw. "Please don't tell me what to do!"

"I'm sorry," he said. At her house, Maxine said good night and left him.

And at his own house, his father noticed the grass-stained pants: "So it's come to laying around in the grass at night."

And Maxine, since, acted as if nothing had happened. . . .

"JESSE!" He started, hearing again the noise from Park Avenue and seeing the people in the street below.

"Are you still here?" his mother exclaimed. "Is Papa going to give it to you!" He burst out of the house.

His father, in front of a pushcart piled high with oranges, apples, and pale, golden pears, was busy waiting on a customer. Jesse slowed down, and was surprised to see Maxine, who seldom helped at the market, arranging red-ribboned celery bunches and lettuce heads in neat rows on a pushcart not far from his father's.

"Maxine!" he exclaimed.

She tossed her head in reply, without turning. For the first time he felt angry with her.

"Maxine," he repeated, and, grasping her wrist, turned her around.

"Get your hands off me," she said.

"You can look at me when I'm talking to you," he answered, freeing her nevertheless.

She placed her hands on her hips, poised her head to a side, and composed her lips in a smile. "All right, I'm looking. Do I get the kewpie doll now?"

He took her hand, gently this time.

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"Maxine, don't be sore at me."

She shrugged. "Why should *I* be sore at *you*?"

"Why must you talk that way, Maxine? When'll you go out with me again?"

"Again?"

"We went to that dance together," he reminded her.

"Oh, that," she said, dismissing it with another shrug, and adding, "Your father's giving you dirty looks. He's mad."

"He's mad if I breathe," said Jesse. "Why are you so different now from that night, Maxine?"

"What night?"

He shook his head sadly, and went over to his father, who said "Good morning."

"I'm sorry I'm late."

His father nodded. "You were in a terrible hurry."

"I wouldn't have stopped off if you hadn't been waiting on that woman."

"Of course," his father said, taking from his pocket a handful of coins. "That's some bargain you picked for yourself over there."

"Lay off me, Pop. I said I'm sorry I'm late. What do you want, my heart on a platter?"

His father gave him fifty cents.

"Suppose I have to make change for a dollar?" asked Jesse.

"You can get it from Natale over there."

"Thanks, Pop. You sure have faith in me."

"When I want to gamble, I'll play the horses," said his father, and walked off.

JESSE waited on several people while his father was away, but passed the larger part of the time staring at Maxine. He tried to think of the time before he was in love with her, wondering if there had been such a time.

Once, in desperation, he had spoken of her to his mother. "Puppy-love," she had told him. "It don't mean nothing, believe me. It all comes out in the wash."

At that moment, Maxine's father appeared, and Jesse thought that perhaps now she would come over to him. She began to speak animatedly to her father, and continued doing so for a long time. Jesse went so far as to signal to her, but she pretended not to see.

No. Have nothing further to do with her.

A woman came to his father's stand, and began to pinch the pears.

"Lady," Jesse said, "please don't handle the fruit. Tell me what you want and I'll give it to you."

The woman went on pinching the pears, and finally asked for a pound. Jesse tossed them rapidly into a bag. One fell to the ground. He retrieved it and threw it in with the others.

"Who wants your garbage from the gutter?" the woman said.

Jesse looked into her wrinkled, jowly face, and saw in it everything he disliked: Maxine's coldness, his parents' sarcasms, the shabbiness of the neighborhood.

"It won't kill you," he replied.

"It won't kill me?" the woman repeated. "I don't have to shop by you, Mr. Smart Aleck. There are plenty other places I can go."

Jesse's father returned in the midst of it. He listened to the woman, removed the bag from Jesse's hand, emptied it, and filled it with different pears.

"This boy is a wise guy, from six months old," he said to the woman.

Jesse planted himself in front of his father. "You're talking about me," he said. "Don't you remember me? I'm Jesse, your son!"

His father's face reddened. He was a broad-shouldered, short man, though not as short as Jesse. "I know you," he said. "I know you only too well, Mr. Wise Guy. You can go now. Go over to your girl friend. She knows how to handle you."

Jesse faced his father another second, and then went. He walked a long distance before his head cleared and the heaviness in his chest eased.

HE HAD gone westward from the market, and ended outside Central Park. He entered the park and thought first of going to where he had sat with Maxine, but the idea made him suddenly shiver, and he

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chose instead a bench facing the lake. Near him, dozing, was a middle-aged man, a gray stubble on his face, his shoes scuffed, and his pants threadbare. Jesse shivered again.

A few rowboats sailed over the lake, their dark oars curving boldly into the water, and out again, dripping. In the boats were couples, boys and girls his own age.

Perhaps if he could get a job and make some money, she would act differently. Why should she go out with him, after all? Out where? For a walk in the park? Ah, but when he got a job! He'd take her to shows, he'd take her dancing. He imagined that they were in a night club. He wore a tuxedo, and was smoking a cigarette. She sat across the table from him. There was a candlestick, and French doors. The orchestra played low music: tangos. He held her hand, and she smiled.

He imagined her with him now, in the park, and crooked his arm, aching to hold her, along the back of the bench.

"Excuse me."

He looked up. A woman with a baby carriage was preparing to sit down. What doesn't come out in the wash. He glanced at her puffy, tired face, from which dangled a lighted cigarette, and removed his arm.

But, ah. . . . Where would he ever get a job? His father thought it was easy. He wouldn't think so if he had ever gone to an employment agency: what's your experience? how old are you? is that so? well, I'll tell you how old you are, you're twelve, maybe thirteen, tops. . . . Once, a fellow he knew suggested leaving New York, bumming around. But leaving New York meant leaving Maxine.

Why had she taken *him* into the dance? She'd been looking for someone. For whom? No doubt some fellow she really had been waiting for. But there was still the kiss, which he began to analyze in retrospect. He felt himself at the edge of an unpleasant intuition when the baby in the carriage began to pant, cough, and cry.

Soon it was screaming. The mother lifted it from the carriage, and cooed and gurgled at it. It would not be placated. The mouth was open wide, the eyes closed, the color a dull red. The mother kept petting it. The man on the bench opened his eyes, watched for a moment, and then left. Jesse followed.

From the park, Jesse walked slowly to the school yard in his neighborhood. They were choosing up a game of stickball. They called him. "Jesse, want a game?"

He shook his head. His father had been drumming it into him so about being out of work that he had come to feel guilty about playing or even being seen on the streets during hours when other people worked. He was thankful for evenings and Sundays.

"C'mon Jesse! We need one more man."

"Nah."

"Then the hell with ya!"

He watched a crap game in a sheltered corner of the yard. Bored with that he leaned against the wire fence and watched the stickball game.

A policeman suddenly appeared, and with him, running and scuffling: he was breaking up the crap-game. The players made off with the dice and most of the money, but the policeman caught one boy. He then called Jesse. "Me?" said Jesse.

The policeman nodded, and Jesse obeyed, hesitantly. The policeman picked up a nickel and a penny still on the ground. As he did, the boy he was holding twisted free and dashed out of the yard. The policeman winked at Jesse, "And he was wanted by the FBI." Handing Jesse the two coins, he added, "Here, sonny, buy yourself some candy."

Sonny, buy yourself some candy! Jesse was about to throw the coins in the cop's face and run for it, when he got another idea. He bowed low, and cried, "Thank you, thank you, kind sir! Thank you!"

The policeman stared. Most of the side that was at bat in the stickball game moved closer to hear what was happening. Jesse bowed again.

"Thank you, you generous man! Now I can buy another share of AT&T!"

He glared at the policeman, waiting to see him explode, which in another second happened. But instead of becoming angry,

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the policeman burst into convulsive laughter, pausing to choke out, "Who's your broker, sonny? Quick, where does he live?" And he leaned against the fence, beating his hands over his knees.

The boys at bat began to smile. One of them laughed, and it spread. Soon they were all staggering about, pointing at Jesse, who was backed against the fence, clutching the six cents in his fist. The boys in the field wandered in, one by one, and joined in the commotion.

Jesse finally made his way through them, brushing from his arms the fingers of those who clutched weakly at him as he passed. He asked himself already why he had done that, and there seemed now no good reason. He had acted just like what the cop had taken him for: a kid.

He still heard their laughter when he reached the street. "What I deserve," he muttered.

AT THE stroke of one he arrived at the market to relieve his father for lunch. The sun penetrated the railroad structure overhead and glowed in strips on the pushcarts and the gutter. Jesse sat on an empty fruit crate behind the cart, and let the sun touch his face. No customers. He was sleepy, and his lids narrowed. Nice. Maxine was still in the market, but he had succeeded so far in keeping his eyes away from her.

A rich voice rang out. It was Chatterton, the "numbers man," a Negro. He wore a tan checked sport shirt, tan gabardine slacks, and brown and white shoes. He went from pushcart to pushcart, picking up bets. What you call an honest living. But why not? He was working. A solid citizen.

The six cents!

"Hey, Chatterton," called Jesse. He came, smiling.

"What's on your mind, sonny?"

The term annoyed Jesse, but he said only, as he offered Chatterton the coins, "On one fifty-six."

Chatterton shook his head. "You too young for numbers, sonny. You better grow up a bit first."

Jesse was about to lash out, when he remembered the playground. He forced a smile. "I'm grown up enough to be unemployed," he said.

Chatterton went off into gales of laughter. "That so? Then you qualify as a numbers player. What was that number you told me?"

Jesse repeated it, gratified.

"Okay," said Chatterton, still laughing. He scribbled a note and gave Jesse a piece of paper.

As Chatterton departed, Jesse was surprised to see Maxine waving her finger at him. When she smiled, he knew how much he was hers.

"I saw you," she called, "and young boys shouldn't gamble away their father's money on the numbers."

"What are you talking about?" exclaimed Jesse. "That money wasn't my father's, it was mine."

Maxine shook her head. "Tell that to one of your infant friends, not to me." His heart dropped. What was he to do? What was he to do? What was he to do?

LATE in the afternoon Jesse walked toward the subway and met Frank Gomez coming home from work. Frank was a dark, willowy boy of eighteen, with a faint eruption of moustache above his lip.

"I'm pooped," said Frank. "I envy you, Jesse. I wish I never got a job."

"Cut it out," said Jesse.

"I swear," Frank protested. "Throwing around hundred pound sacks of sugar all day long—it's a crime."

"You're working," said Jesse. "You can hold your head up."

"What do I get out of it? It's all handed over."

The boys walked to the street they lived on.

"Want to go to the park tonight, Frank?" asked Jesse.

"Got a date with Carlotta."

"See that," said Jesse, speaking evenly to cover his disappointment. "There you are."

Frank shrugged. "With two bucks to

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spend. So I take her to the movies and buy her a soda, and I'm through."

"It's better than staying home, or doing nothing."

Frank stopped, a grin broadening his face. "There you got something, my boy!" He grabbed Jesse's shoulders. "Carlotta! Oh boy!" He hugged Jesse tightly, exclaiming over and over, "Carlotta, oh Carlotta!"

"Let go of me, you lunatic!" shouted Jesse, and at length tore loose. "What's wrong with you?"

"That's how it is when I think of Carlotta," said Frank, smiling. "You ought to know. You got Maxine."

Jesse nodded grimly. "Have I got *her*—just where she wants me."

"But you like her?"

"Yeah, I like her all right. I don't want to, but I can't help it."

"And why do you like her?"

They reached their corner, and stopped.

"I don't know. I ought to hate her guts. Then I'd be free."

"Don't give me that," Frank said slyly. "I know why you like her."

"Okay," sighed Jesse. "Get it off your mind. Why do I like her?"

"You like her," said Frank, waving his index finger at his friend, "you like her, because. . . ." He traced curves in the air with his hands.

There was a moment's pause, after which Jesse said, "How can you be so dumb and live, and get a job, and make money?"

Frank leaned back and burst into laughter. Jesse thought of punching his friend in the stomach, changed his mind, and waited until Frank stopped.

"You're older than I am," said Jesse. "What makes you act like such a jerk?"

"That's because we're different, Jesse. You're smart but sad. I'm dumb but happy."

Jesse decided suddenly to speak to Frank about Maxine. "You're not so dumb. Let's go over to your stoop. I want to talk to you."

"Okay," said Frank, and he nodded, greeting a woman passing into the house with bundles. Then he sat down, and looked up at Jesse. "Okay, shoot."

"You're a big woman man," Jesse started

"Correct."

"You claim you know a lot about girls."

Frank shook his head. "Not a lot. Everything."

"All right. What I'm going to tell you, I'm going to tell you as a friend, not because it's funny. I want to know what you think."

"Right," said Frank, and he listened attentively to what Jesse had to say. When Jesse was finished, he said, "That kid is a tramp of long standing. The best thing you can do is keep away from her."

Jesse came at once to her defense. "But what makes you say that she's a tramp? Just because she may not like me doesn't mean she's a tramp."

Frank looked at him pityingly. "What do you think, because she looks innocent? They all *look* innocent. It takes them years before they stop *looking* innocent. My God! What are you all hot and bothered about, because she kissed you?"

Jesse said nothing, and the two boys gazed at each other. "She had an urge," said Frank, "so she kissed you."

The unpleasantness Jesse had been on the verge of, earlier, in the park, now came to flower. His face clouded and Frank felt sorry for him. Putting his arm about Jesse's shoulders, he said, "Forget her. . . . Here. I'll show you something that'll give you a thrill," he added, kidding, and he displayed some money, his week's pay.

"Give it to me," said Jesse.

Frank handed him the money, and he smoothed it against his palm. "These are the boys—Washington and Lincoln. Collect plenty of their pictures on green pieces of paper—that's everything, Frank, isn't it?"

Frank's lip curled. "It's crap," he said, snatching back the bills. "Here, here's a picture of Lincoln. Take it. . . . No. The hell with them! What the hell did they ever do for me that was so wonderful? Brought me up? Put me through high school? I never asked to be born any more than I made the school laws. Come on, Jesse. Make a date with Maxine. Spend it on her. She'll go out with you if you have dough."

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Frank said, "Don't be a sap. Take what you can get."

"No," said Jesse, "I'd never be able to pay you back."

HE LOUNGED in the front room after supper, watching his sister primp for a date. She was not too bright, but pretty, with red hair like his own. Yet she was good-hearted.

At eight o'clock her boy friend arrived. He nodded to Jesse, who said, "Be going back to City College soon, huh Stanley?"

Stanley snickered. "Going back? I never stopped. I been going to summer school the last two months."

"Lover of knowledge, huh?" said Jesse.

"Boy, do I love knowledge," Stanley said, wagging his head.

"Then why go?"

Stanley shrugged. "I'd sooner study to be an accountant than kill myself in my old man's grocery."

"I see," said Jesse. "You study hard?"

"You joking?" asked Stanley.

"Why?"

"I'll tell you why. They got geniuses there from every borough. I'm not so clever, but I'm not stupid enough to kill myself. I'll get out with the same degree as the rest of them."

"Well, that's philosophy," said Jesse.

Stanley agreed, grinning. Jesse's sister announced that she was ready, and the two departed.

Jesse went into the kitchen, where his mother was reading a newspaper at the table. Around her lay the soiled supper-dishes. Jesse placed them in the sink, and began scrubbing them.

"Ma."

"Hah?" said his mother, absent-mindedly.

"Did you hear what Stanley said?"

"What did he say?"

"You didn't hear me talking to the dope?" said Jesse. "The only reason I wasted my breath on him was because I thought you were listening."

His mother looked up from her paper and said, "Which shows you ain't so smart yourself, because I didn't hear one word."

Jesse, leaning over the sink, spoke past his shoulder. "You can't outsmart me that easy, Ma. I'll give you an outline. Stanley is being sent to City College for nothing, for no reason in the world, and I have to start night college next month. Is his father any better off than mine?"

"Two wrongs don't make a right. His father is crazy, so yours has to be the same?"

Jesse smiled sourly and said no more until the dishes were all clean and put away.

"All right," he said, "you can go into the front room."

His mother murmured, "You done already? You done them all?"

"You're welcome," said Jesse, leaving the house.

"What?" called his mother.

The door slammed.

JESSE walked toward Park Avenue. He passed a newsstand, and remembered his bet on the numbers. While the newsman looked the other way, he turned over a copy of the *Mirror*, and placed his thumb beneath the last three figures of the clearing house report. One fifty-six. His knees began to shake. He pulled the paper closer and compared it with the slip Chatterton had given him. One fifty-six.

The newsman turned. "Hey! What's this—the public library? Buy it or beat it!"

Jesse went quickly to the candy store where Chatterton hung out. Chatterton was there with three others, playing the pinball machine. Jesse tapped Chatterton's arm, and thrust forward his slip. "My number," he said.

"Oh yes, sonny, your number," said Chatterton. "Send your old man over and I'll pay him off."

He returned to the pinball machine. Jesse danced around him, his voice trembling with anger. "You didn't bet with my old man. You bet with me."

Chatterton seemed undecided about whether or not to be offended. But one of his companions, a pale, pudgy, thick-lipped man chewing a cigar, said, "Why don't you pay the boy off if he hit you?"

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"I don't know," Chatterton answered mildly, "I don't like to mess around with a kid this young. He ought to send his old man."

"He hit you, didn't he?" the pudgy man said. "He got a hand to take the dough and a pocket to put it in, ain't he? All right. Then why don't you pay him off, Chatterton?"

"Okay," said Chatterton, "okay. No skin off my nose who gets the dough."

He counted seven five-dollar bills and gave them to Jesse.

"Now," said the pudgy man, patting Jesse's head, "you take that money home, and don't stop off with no women. They ain't no good, none of them."

Jesse nodded uneasily, backing away. When he was at the door, the man called, "Keep away from them, sonny, remember what I tell ya." He smiled, his thick, moist lips parting to expose the stained teeth clenching the cigar butt.

Jesse sidled out of the store, glad to get away. Park Avenue was noisy and crowded with shoppers, who swarmed in and out of the shops and around the pushcarts. Thirty-five dollars!

There, yes, in his pocket. The feel of the money made him so giddy that it was only when he was back home that he thought of Maxine. But having thought of her, he felt his heart race.

He pulled off his shirt and trousers. Then he washed, wet his comb, and combed back his rumpled hair. He put on a clean white shirt and selected a blue tie with white polka dots. The knot didn't come out just right, but he let it go, and took his gray suit from the closet—the suit with the grass-stained trousers. It was old and had been let out and was heavy for summer, but it was the better of the two he owned. He gazed at his reflection in the mirror, and was satisfied.

He removed the money from the other trousers, peeled off one of the bills, and put it in his pocket. He brought the rest to his mother, who was sitting at the window of the unlighted front room.

"Ma, I'm going out, and I may be back late."

"You can come back by ten o'clock. That'll be late enough," she replied.

"Yeah," said Jesse. "Here's something for you," and thrusting the money into her hand, he hurried out.

MAXINE lived on the third floor. Jesse dashed up one flight, and on the landing almost ran into her.

She wore a beige dress under a coat that was a beautiful pale-green. And she was beautiful too, and seemed much older than during the day. With her, a man in his twenties, wearing a cream-colored suit and pointed orange shoes.

Jesse's eyes met Maxine's. She moved her head almost imperceptibly from side to side. He understood: don't smile at me or do anything that will make it look as if I know you. The man, who had a neatly trimmed moustache and glistening black hair, stared at him out of small, close-set dark eyes.

Jesse hesitated, and then stepped out of their way. He walked up a few steps of the next flight, waited until he could no longer hear their footfalls, and went slowly down. And still he didn't hate her. Wasn't that funny?

Downstairs, he caught sight of them turning the corner. He felt that he had to follow them, and actually ran a few steps. But why? What good was it?

Now his mother would ask where he had started out for, why he was dressed up, and so forth. And so instead of going back home, he walked uptown. He turned west at 122nd Street, passed Grant's Tomb, and sat down on a bench overlooking the Hudson. Across the river, on the Jersey shore, an electric sign winked on and off: on . . . off . . . on . . . off . . . . What could Maxine see in a man like that?

. . .That night at the dance, Maxine had been on the lookout for someone like this little-eyed guy. Maybe they had had a date, and the fellow didn't come on time. So Maxine went to the dance, to fix him.

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That would be like her.

Well, he knew. So what did he see in *her*? He flung his arms over the back of the bench. Automobiles sped along the highway below. The shore lights gleamed over the water, revealing the rapid inward tide of the river. He sat for about two hours before he started slowly homeward.

At Seventh Avenue, a tall, heavily-perfumed girl spoke to him. "How about a good time, pretty-boy?"

He passed without replying, and when it was too late to turn back, regretted faintly the lost opportunity. Then he wondered whether his silence had hurt her feelings. There should have been some satisfaction in hurting *their* feelings once. But somehow there wasn't.

His parents were in the kitchen when he got home. He had hardly closed the door when he heard his father call him. "Jesse, come in here."

His father was pacing the floor. Jesse watched for a while as his father walked back and forth, sighing deeply, and occasionally letting an angry glance fall Jesse's way. "Well, what do you want, Pop?" asked Jesse at last.

His father pointed to the table. Jesse's five-dollar bills were laid out, side by side, like evidence against him. "Where does this money come from?"

Jesse trembled with anger, and his first impulse was to snap back. He restrained himself for one second, then another, and then another. And as his silence lengthened, he began to realize that he was no longer angry, that he cared very little now about his father's opinion of him.

When he was a little boy, his father had brought him home one night and walked before him into the unlighted apartment. He had run after his father in panic, and had grasped his sleeve, shivering. His father had laughed and said that there was nothing to be afraid of, and Jesse had been comforted. What had happened to the man who was now saying to Jesse's mother:

"What are we going to do with him? Who knows *where* he'll end up? All my life I work for an honest living, and work hard, hard. This kind of thing I steer clear of like from poison. Now *he* brings it here, into my house."

"Pop," said Jesse, "I know you're kidding about the money, because if you were serious—by the way, here's another five—if you were serious, you'd be more respectful to it, like to God."

His father struck out at Jesse with the back of his fist, but Jesse ducked in time.

"Another thing," said Jesse, "I'm not your little boy any more, so get the idea out of your head about kicking me around the house like a football, see?"

"Shame on you, you snotnose, talking to your father like that!" his mother exclaimed.

His father nodded slowly, and when he spoke again, it was on a new tack. "Well, big shot, king of the household! You want to be treated like a man. I'll treat you like a man. From now on, if you're watching my pushcart, you ain't taking none of my money to play on the numbers! You try *that* again, and you'll see. I'll turn you over to the police station like any stranger!"

All the fight ebbed from Jesse's voice as he said, "Who told you that lie?"

His father sensed the change. "Lie?" he repeated. "How could it be a lie when it comes from the lips of your queen, your sweetheart, your wonderful girl, your brilliant choice, your Maxine?"

Jesse turned away his face. He left the house again and walked blindly, from habit, toward the market. He wanted only not to think of her.

All the pushcarts had been put away, and the windows of the stores were dark. The avenue lay deserted beneath the railroad structure. Jesse crossed the street, and stopped near the spot where during the day Maxine had stood. If she were there now, he would strangle her. He spread his fingers, raised them, and imagined them around her throat. Then he dropped his arms limply to his sides.

"But I wouldn't," he whispered, "I wouldn't."

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DASHIELL HAMMETT'S "PRIVATE EYE"

No Loyalty Beyond the Job

DAVID T. BAZELON

THE figure of the rough and tough private detective—or the "private eye," as we have come to call him with our circulating-library knowingness—is one of the key creations of American popular culture. He haunts the 25-cent thrillers on the newsstands, he looks out at us grimly from the moving-picture screen, his masterful gutter-voice echoes from a million radios: it is hard to remember when he was not with us. But he is only some twenty years old. His discoverer—his prophet—is Dashiell Hammett.

In the chief critical history of the detective story written by a fellow-believer—Howard Haycraft's *Murder for Pleasure* (1941)—Dashiell Hammett is placed centrally in "the American Renaissance of the late twenties and early thirties." Except for the fact that this "Renaissance" started a bit late and ended a bit soon, it coincides with a much larger cultural and social impulse that (except for the depression and the consequent preparation for war) was the most significant feature of the inter-war period. Culturally, this impulse would include, defined in the most general way, the productions of Hemingway, Faulkner, Dos Passos, Farrell; the critical work of Edmund Wilson; the "brain trust" aspect of the New Deal; and the whole complex of expression connected with the diffusion of Marxist ideas and the growth of political consciousness.

But what began as a revolt of the individual sensibility against the whole ideological pattern allied with American participation in the First World War (the great "debunking") ended in bureaucracy, Stalinism, proletarian literature, lots and lots of advertising-Hollywood-radio-popular-magazine jobs, and —another war.

The relation between Popular Frontism and popular culture is not accidental; the kind of mind that is able to construct commercial myths without believing in them is the same kind of mind that needs to construct one great myth in which it can believe, whether it is the myth of Abraham Lincoln-Franklin Roosevelt-Walt Whitman-John Henry, or the myth of the Socialist Fatherland, or some incongruous mixture of the two. And the tenacity with which the creator of popular culture holds to this myth—in the face of all the facts which precisely his "sophisticated" mind might be expected to understand—is the measure of the corruption that this one great "ideal" is supposed to cover. Nor is it accidental that these members of the "working class," when threatened with the loss of their fantastically lucrative jobs, should be able to speak in all sincerity of being threatened with starvation because of their political convictions. For what holds this uneasy psychic structure together for the living individual is that American Nirvana —the Well-Paying Job. In America a good job is expected to be an adequate substitute for almost anything; in an industrial society, the job is the first and last necessity of life.

IN THE career and writings of Dashiell Hammett, one of the most successful American practitioners of the detective story, DAVID T. BAZELON finds crystallized a problem of increasing significance to modern culture: the moral abdication involved in the technician's relationship to his job. Mr. Bazelon has written on politics, history, and literature for the *Nation*, *New Republic*, *Politics*, and *Partisan Review*. He was born in Shreveport, Louisiana, in 1923, grew up in Milwaukee and Chicago, and attended the Universities of Illinois, Virginia, and Chicago. He wrote the article "The Faith of Henry Wallace," which appeared in the April 1947 COMMENTARY.

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And American society is not only more industrialized than any other, it also embodies fewer traditional elements that might contradict the industrial way of life.

The ascendancy of the job in the lives of Americans—just this is the chief concern of Dashiell Hammett's art. When tuberculosis forced him to return to writing, it was his job experience that he drew upon; and his knowledge of the life of detectives could fit easily into a literary form that had at least as much in common with a production plan as with art. As soon as he got a "better" job, he stopped writing. And, as we shall see, the Job determines the behavior of his fictional characters just as much as it has set the course of his own life.

THE most important fact in Samuel Dashiell Hammett's biography is that he worked off and on for eight years as an operative for the Pinkerton detective agency. Hammett claims that he was pretty good as a detective. (He was involved in several "big" cases, including those of Nicky Arnstein and "Fatty" Arbuckle.) We may take him at his word, since detective work is the only job—including his writing—at which he ever persevered.

Hammett seems to have come from a farm—his place of birth is specified only as St. Mary's County, Maryland, and the date is May 25, 1894. But he received his slight education in Baltimore, leaving school—the Baltimore Polytechnic Institute—at the age of thirteen. His jobs, in more or less chronological order, were: newsboy, messenger boy, freight clerk, stevedore, railroad laborer, detective. During the First World War, he served in Europe as a sergeant in the Ambulance Corps and contracted tuberculosis. He spent two years in hospitals; and his disease finally forced him to abandon his career as a private investigator. Until he began to write in 1922, he worked as advertising manager for a small store in San Francisco.

Apart from one tubercular hero and one dipsomaniac (both of whom are also investigators), Hammett's fictional characters are derived almost entirely from his own experience as a detective.

His first detective stories, built around the nameless figure of the "Continental Op," were published in pulp magazines—*Black Mask, Sunset,* and the like. Hammett was one of a group of detective-story writers who had begun producing violent, realistic material in opposition to the refined puzzles of such old hands as S. S. Van Dine. These postwar stories signified a sharp turn from the genteel English tradition toward the creation of a "lean, dynamic, unsentimental" American style (although, as George Orwell has demonstrated, the English too were solving imaginary crimes in new ways and in new settings). Hammett took the lead in this development.

He published five novels between 1929 and 1933. Together with the short stories written concurrently and earlier, these novels constitute almost the total body of his work. He has been phenomenally successful: his books are still being reprinted and most of his old stories have been dug up and republished. But he has written almost nothing in the last fifteen years. Since 1932 he has wanted to write a play, to begin with, and then go on to "straight" novels; he has said that he does not admire his detective stories. Hammett has been in Hollywood off and on since the early 30's.

There is an obvious coincidence between the beginning of Hammett's sojourn in Hollywood and the *de facto* end of his literary effort. Moreover, his job in the West Coast magic factories (at a reported fifteen hundred dollars a week) is not strictly a writing one; he is employed as a trouble-shooter, patching up scripts and expediting stories, often when the film is already before the cameras. Until 1938 Hammett seems to have been exclusively occupied with his joy-ride on the Hollywood gravytrain, but in that year—it was the height of the Popular Front period—he was seized by "political consciousness." Already forty-four, he had spent six of his best years in Hollywood instead of writing his play, and thus was more or less ready for religion.

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Unlike many victims of the Popular Front, Hammett went on following the Communists—up hill and down dale: Popular Front—No Front—Second Front. We can only assume that his need is great. During the war he was president of the League of American Writers and as such occupied himself lining up talent behind war activities in general and the second front in particular. He also joined the army. At present he serves as head of the New York branch of the Civil Rights Congress, a Stalinist "front" organization; most recently his name turned up as a sponsor of the Cultural and Scientific Conference for World Peace, held in New York in March.

THE core of Hammett's art is his version of the masculine figure in American society. The Continental Op constitutes the basic pattern for this figure, which in the body of Hammett's work undergoes a revealing development.

The older detectives of literature—exemplified most unequivocally by the figure of Sherlock Holmes—stood on a firm social and moral basis, and won their triumphs through the exercise of reason. Holmes, despite his eccentricities, is essentially an English gentleman acting to preserve a moral way of life. The question of his motives never arises, simply because it is answered in advance: he is one of the great army of good men fighting, each in his own way, against evil. Who needs a "motive" for doing his duty? (Holmes' love for his profession is never contaminated by any moral ambiguity: he is not fascinated by evil, but only by the intellectual problem of overcoming evil.) With Hammett, the moral and social base is gone; his detectives would only be amused, if not embarrassed, by any suggestion that they are "doing their duty"—they are merely *doing*.

The Op is primarily a job-holder: all the stories in which he appears begin with an assignment and end when he has completed it. To an extent, *competence* replaces moral stature as the criterion of an individual's worth. The only persons who gain any respect from the Op are those who behave competently—and all such, criminal or otherwise, are accorded some respect. This attitude is applied to women as well as men. In *The Dain Curse,* the Op is attracted deeply only to the woman who has capacity and realism—and he fears her for the same reason. So Woman enters the Hammett picture as desirable not merely for her beauty, but also for her ability to live independently, capably—unmarried, in other words.

But the moral question is not disposed of so easily. Hammett's masculine figures are continually running up against a certain basic situation in which their relation to evil must be defined. In *Red Harvest,* for instance, the detective doing his job is confronted with a condition of evil much bigger than himself. He cannot ignore it since his job is to deal with it. On the other hand, he cannot act morally in any full sense because his particular relation, as a paid agent, to crime and its attendant evils gives him no logical justification for overstepping the bounds of his "job." Through some clever prompting by the Continental Op, the gangsters—whose rule is the evil in *Red Harvest* —destroy each other in their own ways. But it becomes a very bloody business, as the title suggests. And the Op's lost alternative, of perhaps having resolved the situation—and performed his job—with less bloodshed, grows in poignancy. He begins to doubt his own motivation: perhaps the means by which a job is done matters as much as the actual accomplishment of the job.

ONE of the most suggestive aspects of this situation is that the Op's client hinders rather than aids him in resolving the evil. For the client is the capitalist who opened the city to the gangsters in the first place, to break a strike. (This ambiguous relation to the client is characteristic in that it further isolates the detectives; suspicion is imbedded like a muscle in Hammett's characters, and lying is the primary form of communication between them. In two of the novels, the murderer is an old friend of the detective.) If the Op were not simply *em-*

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ployed—that is, if he were really concerned with combating evil—he would have to fight against his client directly, to get at the evil's source. As it is, he confines his attention to his "job," which he carries out with an almost bloodthirsty determination that proceeds from an unwillingness to go beyond it. This relation to the job is perhaps typically American.

What is wrong with the character of the Op—this American—is that he almost never wrestles with personal motives of his own. The private eye has no private life. He simply wants to do his job well. One might think he was in it for the money—but his salary is never made known, is apparently not large, and he isn't even *tempted* to steal. Each story contains at least one fabulously beautiful woman—but the Op goes marching on. If he is a philosopher of some peculiarly American *acte gratuit*, a connoisseur of crime and violence, we never know it, since we are never permitted to know his thoughts. So, while this character often holds a strong primitive fascination because he represents an attempt at a realistic image of a human being who succeeds (survives not too painfully) in an environment of modern anxiety, he is, ultimately, too disinterested—too little involved—to be real.

It is interesting, in view of the importance of job-doing to the detective, to remark the reasons for this lack of personal motivation. What the Op has as a substitute for motives is a more or less total projection of himself into the violent environment of crime and death. And by "projection" I mean that he surrenders his emotions to the world outside while dissociating them from his own purposeful, responsible self; he becomes a kind of sensation-seeker. So, despite all the *Sturm und Drang* of his life, it remains an essentially vicarious one, because the *moral* problem—the matter of individual responsibility or decision-making in a situation where society has defaulted morally—is never even faced, much less resolved. The question of doing or not doing a job competently seems to have replaced the whole larger question of good and evil. The Op catches criminals because it is his job to do so, not because they are criminals. At the same time, it is still important that his job is to catch criminals; just any job will not do: the Op has the same relation to the experience of his job, its violence and excitement, the catharsis it affords, as has the ordinary consumer of mass culture to the detective stories and movies he bolts down with such regularity and in such abundance. His satisfactions require a rejection of moral responsibility—but this in itself requires that he be involved in a situation charged with moral significance—which exists for him solely that it may be rejected.

HAMMETT must have felt the lacks in the Op, for the detective figures that follow —Sam Spade in *The Maltese Falcon*, Ned Beaumont in *The Glass Key*, and Nick Charles in *The Thin Man*—all represent attempts to give his character a more genuine human motivation. And this attempt to intensify the meaning of his detective was also, naturally, an effort on Hammett's own part to express himself more deeply.

"Spade had no original. He is a dream man in the sense that he is what most of the private detectives I worked with would like to have been and what quite a few of them in their cockier moments thought they approached. For your private detective does not—or did not ten years ago when he was my colleague—want to be an erudite solver of riddles in the Sherlock Holmes manner; he wants to be a hard and shifty fellow, able to take care of himself in any situation, able to get the best of anybody he comes in contact with, whether criminal, innocent bystander or client." This statement of Hammett's in his 1934 introduction to *The Maltese Falcon* could have applied equally to the Op, except that Spade is more fully realized.

Spade differs from the Op primarily in the fact that he has a more active sexual motive of his own. This sexual susceptibility serves to heighten, by contrast, his basic job-doing orientation. So when Spade, in conflict, chooses to do his job instead of indulging in romantic sex, he takes on more

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dramatic meaning than does the hero of the Op stories. That is, a new, definite motive has been admitted to the public world, and its relations to that world explored dramatically. But Spade *always* chooses to be faithful to his job—because this means being faithful to his own individuality, his masculine self. The point of the character is clear: to be manly is to love and distrust a woman at the same time. To one woman, Spade says, "You're so beautiful you make me sick!"

The very center of Spade's relation to women resides in a situation where the woman uses her sex, and the anachronistic mores attached to it, to fulfill a non-sexual purpose of her own, usually criminal. It is this situation in *The Maltese Falcon,* coming as the climax of Spade's relation to Brigid O'Shaughnessy, that is the supreme scene of all Hammett's fiction. Its essence is stated very simply by Spade as he answers Brigid's—the woman's eternal—"If you loved me you would. . . ." "I don't care who loves who," he says. "I'm not going to play the sap for you."

In his great struggle with Brigid, Spade must either deny or destroy himself. Because of the great distance between his *self* (summed up in a masculine code grounded in a job) and *others* whom he loves and does things for (women or clients), Spade is seldom able to act "normally" in significant situations. His choice is usually between being masochistic or sadistic—unless he simply withdraws his inner sentient self from the objective situation. It is his job that so alienates him from life—and yet it is his job also that gives him his real contact with life, his focus. If his emotions released their hold on his job, he would find himself adrift, without pattern or purpose. On the other hand, the job is obviously a form of—not a substitute for—living. This dissociation of the form of one's life from the content of actual life-gratifications is symbolized excellently by the fact that the Maltese Falcon—around which so much life has been expended and disrupted—turns out to be merely a lead bird of no intrinsic interest or value.

Ned Beaumont of *The Glass Key* is Hammett's closest, most serious projection, and the author himself prefers *The Glass Key* to all his other books—probably because it was his chief attempt at a genuine novel.

Loyalty is the substitute for job in *The Glass Key*. And the factors of masculinity are a little more evenly distributed among the several characters than in Hammett's more purely detective-story writing. Beaumont is not a professional sleuth, although he occupies himself with getting to the bottom of a murder. Furthermore, the book ends not in the completing of a job but with the hero and heroine planning marriage. We never know whether Beaumont's motive in solving the murder is loyalty, job-doing, or love. However, because the motivation is more complex, though confused, it is superior to that in Hammett's other work.

Beaumont is Hammett's only *weak* hero. He gambles irrationally, gets nervous in a crisis, and seems to be tubercular. The issue of the masculine code is therefore presented in him more sharply and realistically. Unlike the Op, Beaumont is directly involved in evil since he is sidekick to a political racketeer. His relation to the woman involved is ignored over long stretches of the novel, and when Beaumont ends up with Janet Henry we are surprised because unprepared emotionally—although the development is logical in the abstract. It makes sense as consequence rather than as conscious purpose. All in all, *The Glass Key* is an expressive but very ambiguous novel. And this ambiguity reflects, I think, Hammett's difficulty in consciously writing an unformularized novel—that is, one in which an analysis of motives is fundamental.

The ambiguity is also reflected in the style, which is almost completely behavioristic. "He put thoughtfulness on his face"—and one doesn't know whether he is thoughtful or not. We are given various minute descriptions of the hero's breathing process, the condition of his eyes, etc. Hammett employs the technique, I presume, as expertly as it can be. But it is a poor one to begin with, being too often a substitute for an analysis

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of consciousness—being, that is, the *distortion* of such an analysis. (There is only one story in which Hammett shows us the processes of thought in his characters—*Ruffian's Wife*—and it is an embarrassing failure.) But just as consciousness is a weakness for Hammett the man (his conscious mind has been dominated by mere formulas—Stalinism, the detective story, etc.), so analysis of consciousness would appear the same for Hammett the artist. And, of course, he is not wrong. Consciousness is either accepted as an essential, growing factor in the structure of one's life, or else it suffers continual distortion—not by accident, but inevitably.

Beaumont's friend, Paul Madvig, is also his boss and his superior in strength and manliness—almost, indeed, a homosexual love-object. The factors that make Beaumont succeed where Madvig fails—in getting Janet Henry—are therefore extremely important: Beaumont has more awareness of the pretensions of higher society; he banks more on cunning than on pure power; he prefers silence to lying; he does not protect the girl's father-murderer but fights him. Beginning with more weakness than Madvig, with defects in his male armor, he is eventually a more successful male because of his capacity to approach the objects of his desire indirectly—to work upon their relations in the real world rather than remaining fixed on the intrinsic qualities that his desire attributes to them. This factor of cunning and restraint, of knowing when to talk and when to shut up, when to fight, when to run, appears, then, as the final fruit of Hammett's brief but not unrewarding engagement in literature. The private investigator's shrewdness emerges finally as more important—more reliable in a pinch—than his toughness (which in Ned Beaumont is reduced to the power to endure rather than the power to act aggressively).

Now such an indirect road to satisfaction must be supplemented by consciousness—by which I mean a comprehensive hypothesis as to the nature of real life, based on as accurate as possible an understanding of the environment—or else it is likely to become frustrating beyond endurance. We can assume this alliance between our deep desires and a carefully defined world *on paper*, intellectually; but can it be *lived*? Or, a less ambitious question, can it subserve the creation of an aesthetically unified novel?

In the case of Hammett, the answer apparently is no—not without great distortion. For Hammett, in *The Glass Key*, got only as far as the experience of the vital need of knowing (beyond the horizon of the job). He then collapsed—quite completely. Instead of following his literary problem where it was leading him, he preferred to follow his new-found Hollywoodism down whatever paths of pleasure *it* might take him. He postponed the attempt to resolve those problems with which life had presented him. But it was, it could be, only a postponement, and after a few years he came upon Stalinism—that fake consciousness, fake resolution, perfect apposite of Hollywoodism—and crossed the t's of his lost art.

Nick Charles, the hero of *The Thin Man*, spends more time drinking than solving crimes. If he does his job at all, it is only because Nora, his wife, eggs him on for the sake of her own excitement. Nick is as indulgent of his wife's whims as he is of the bottle's contents. Ned Beaumont's weakness, which was at least to some degree a product of moral consciousness, becomes in Nick Charles the weakness of mere self-indulgence, the weakness of deliberate *unconsciousness;* thus literal drunkenness becomes a symbol of that more fundamental drunkenness that submerges the individual in commercialized culture and formularized "progressive" politics. *The Thin Man* was very successful, as I have noted. It is a very amusing detective comedy. But whatever the book was publicly, to Hammett himself it must surely have been an avowal of defeat. He had to give up Ned Beaumont, because Ned Beaumont was almost a human being and *The Glass Key* was almost a novel. It is Nick Charles who survives best in the atmosphere in which Hammett has stifled his talent.

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FROM THE AMERICAN SCENE

FIFTY YEARS IN THE CANADIAN NORTH

Memories of an Old Prospector

RAYMOND ROSENTHAL

AN OLD man, Abe Weisman wasn't interested in pleasing any more, so he told his stories for their own sake, for himself more than for you. It was evident just by the way he sat there at that mahogany table in that dim Washington Heights living room, his hands cupped neatly in front of him with school-child passivity, his voice going along evenly, too evenly, his dry swart face closed and inward like a seer's. Even his jokes passed by unacknowledged; you could laugh if you wished to, but it obviously made no difference to him. The truth was he was too deeply inside the story ever to pause and laugh. The force of an old man's self-indulging pleasure holds him there, the slow, sour, always dangerous pleasure of unfolding your own past. He is lost in it.

He is impatient too, as only someone caught in the trance of what happened twenty, thirty years ago can be impatient. Out of the corner of mind's dimming eye he espies a moment forgotten until now, a moment tossed miraculously up by the very effort of story-telling—and just then, when all is about to come solidly into sight, this young fellow, this writer, asks some foolish question and breaks the past's returning flow. Sure, he is trying to tell his story, this young fellow is trying to follow it—but why so many questions? Better to sit quiet and listen when an old man talks.

"You want to know how I came to America? To start with, I was born in Vilna, Lithuania, on January 21, 1872. That makes me an old man, I guess. Old enough. Well, my father was a big merchant, a broker. In the summer he sold oats to the Russian cavalry and in the winter he'd float shipments of wheat and tar down the river to Danzig and Koenigsberg. We had a bookkeeper who worked for my father, a cousin, Nat Prensky, and after ten years with us he went to America where his father was. That was Joseph Prensky, in the custom peddlers business in New York, outfitting peddlers with merchandise. Those days it was a good business. Anyway, when Nat left I was sad; he was my friend. So I kept pestering my parents they should let me go to America. I was only thirteen, but I was a big strong kid and terrible stubborn. They couldn't get it out of my head. Finally they said I could go. My mother sewed up my money in a little bag for me to hang round my neck, and the day I left my father was so ashamed his son was going to America with the poor people that he wouldn't come down to the railroad station to say goodbye. So that was how I left the old country."

It was hard to place Abe Weisman's way of talking. Having lived for fifty-odd years in Ontario, running a general store, prospect-

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ABE WEISMAN, now seventy-seven years old and living in Washington Heights, spent most of his life on the Canadian frontier, where he kept store, prospected for gold, and turned his hand to many things, with varying success. RAYMOND ROSENTHAL, who here tells his story, is a writer whose own career has including organizing textile workers for the CIO, writing for the left-wing press, and frontline action with the American Army in North Africa and Italy. He is now at work on a novel. He wrote "The Fate of Isaak Babel," which appeared in COMMENTARY in 1947, and has reviewed books in COMMENTARY and the *New Leader*. He was born in Brooklyn in 1914.

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ing for gold, selling mining machinery, his speech was an ethnological extravaganza composed of a whole frontier's polyglot lingos—the sing-song endings of French Canadian patois, the abrupt salty locutions of the Scotch, the bluff high-handed flights of the Irish. Yet preserved beneath all the coatings and layers, like a mother element, a base metal that rang truer than the alloys, was his Yiddish accent, still resonant after all the years. It was the thread that led back to his beginnings, attenuated to filament thinness, yet somehow never snapped.

"That was my goodbye, but my welcome was worse. The ship docked and from Castle Garden I took a wagon straight to my uncle's house on the East Side. As soon as my uncle saw me, a young kid, a greenhorn pushed on his hands, he began to curse and swear something awful: 'So you wanted to come to America! Well, you'll have to work here! We don't like no loafers.' And then he gave me my first present in the new land. He handed me a half bag full of coal, heavy like lead, and told me to carry it down to the store. So that was my hello. And then I went to work. I had a cot in the subcellar with the rats and every day I worked from seven in the morning until eleven at night delivering cases of drygoods to the freight sheds. I pushed them on a three-wheel cart. Every Friday my uncle Joe Prensky paid me my wages. It was ten cents, ten cents every Friday.

"But I had fun anyway. After all, I was just a kid. You know Walter Winchell. His father was my pal—Jake Wineschell. Jake's father was at that time the biggest *chazan* on the East Side. 'Chaim de Sulva de Chazan' they called him. Sulva was the town in the old country where he came from. On Saturday Jake and I and some other chaps would get the day off. I'll tell you how we worked it. There was a biscuit factory near Grand Street and we'd go there and buy broken biscuits. Five cents for a big bag. And all day long we'd eat those broken biscuits and drink soda pop. On Fourth Avenue, just above the Bowery, was where all the teamsters' wagons traveled, the main route through the city. Up there we'd jump on the tail of one of those wagons. Usually the teamster would let us ride, what did he care, but now and then a mean one would take his whip and beat us off. But when we got to Central Park we'd jump off ourselves—that was our destination. And we'd spend the whole day there, walking in the woods and looking at the animals in the zoo, but the big event was the carousel. That took my last five cents, the end of my wages. We'd all try to catch the golden ring for a free ride. The others got it, but I never did. Oh there was terrible jealousy about that gold ring. I used to brood about it. I thought I was in hard luck or something.

"THEN one day I left my uncle's. Threw the keys in his face. Every Saturday morning my job was to look after the freight. This particular Saturday I wanted to get away with my chums so I asked the freightman to come over early, as a favor. 'Sure,' he says, 'if you give me one of those pocketbooks your uncle sells.' It was a cheap thing, made of paper, we swept them out with the trash. So I said yes and he comes and just as I was giving him the pocketbook my other cousin Philip Prensky comes down into the cellar. He's dead now, poor fellow, but I'll never forget the way he sneaked up those stairs without saying a word. After the freightman left, here he comes back and starts yelling at me: 'You dirty little thief! You stole that pocketbook from uncle,' he yells. Oh he was a mean little brute, a miser. I got so angry I threw the keys in his face and I walked out, left.

"But I didn't have no place to go. For three nights I slept in an empty express wagon, three whole days without a bite to eat. One morning about four o'clock a policeman comes along and raps me on the feet with his club and wakes me up. 'Don't you have a home?' he says. I tell him no. 'Well,' he says, 'if you come with me I'll get you put up'. 'No you won't,' I says. 'I don't need a home.' Now I'll tell you something. That policeman walked away but he must have had a generous nature because right where he was standing I saw a little purse. He must have dropped it on purpose for me. I jumped down quick and, what do you know, there was seven pennies in it. I was rich! I bought a roll for a cent and a glass of milk for another cent, and that was the first food for three days.

"Soon after I landed a job. I met a kid I knew, a newsboy, Irish, and he was sure surprised to see me out by myself looking like a tramp. I told him I'd quit my uncle and was

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on my own. So he says: 'Stay with me at the Newsboy's Home.' In those days it was near the old *World* building. For six cents they gave you your supper, a bed, and breakfast the next morning. I should say I got two jobs. The first one was in a brush factory and they fired me at the end of the week. Just handed me two-fifty and fired me. Why, I'll never know. I went out and bought new clothes, a shirt and tie, new shoes, and when I was finished I still had fifty cents in my pocket. Then got another job as a messenger boy with a German concern. The Irish kid told me about it. Said you had to speak German. So when they asked me, *'Sprechen Sie Deutsch,'* I said, *'yah,'* and they gave me the job just like that. Of course I couldn't speak German, only Yiddish.

"About this time Jake Wineschell took me into his house on East Broadway. I remember the old man Chaim was writing books all the time. All day long he would sit at the table, a big pail of beer in front of him, smoking cigarettes, drinking the beer, and writing his books. He was a free-thinker, an awful crank. What his books were about I don't know. But as soon as he saw me come into the house he looked up and asked me if I wanted a glass of beer. I said no. Then he said: 'I'll tell you the rules and regulations of my house. Now, listen. The next time I ask you whether you want a beer, you say yes. That will save me a lot of *tsoros*. Because I know that when you say no you really mean yes, and if you don't take it when I offer it to you, then you'll steal it and I'll just be out beer. Then there'll be real *tsoros*.'"

All this time I had kept silent but now I laughed so loud that Abe stopped, annoyed, yet in spite of himself looking at me with that dead-pan triumphant stare of the story-teller who knows he has hit home. I wanted to hear more about Chaim. "What was he?" I asked. "A socialist?" Abe didn't believe so. "He was a free-thinker," he said. "You know, one of these cranks." That was all he could remember.

The term "free-thinker" I learned later covered a large and shadowy area of human aberration and cantankerousness in Abe Weisman's private mythology. You were a "free-thinker" if you voted the Liberal party ticket —Abe had always, as one of the more stable members of a free-floating community, voted straight Conservative up in Ontario—if you had a malevolent streak or peculiar ways, wrote books, for instance, and talked a lot about abstract, off-the-ground subjects. His tone when speaking of such examples of human folly was neither one of pity nor contempt, but rather as one might say, wonderingly, "Look, that's what grown men waste their time doing."

"You know," Abe said, almost apologetically, for he felt my disappointment over Chaim, "ever since my son Jess told me you wanted to hear my story I've been thinking over the old days. I stay awake nights anyway, so now I got something to do in bed. I lay there and think and all the things that happened to me come back. They rush into my head, it's hard to get them in the right order. I'm seventy-seven and I got a lot to remember. Things get mixed up; my memory's not so good any more. For instance, you asked me to tell you the story about the rabbi, the one Jess told you about. Now that's a real good story and I remember it, but once I start thinking about it I start something going in my head and a hundred stories that that rabbi hasn't a thing in the world to do with come rushing into it."

I assured Abe that no one could remember in any other way; and that it shouldn't surprise him that everything was somehow connected with everything else. Just tell it as it came to him; it was my job to get it straightened out. Without further preliminary or apology, Abe plunged back into his story-telling.

"Now we're up in Canada," he said, "where my life really begins. I got there by a fluke. A relative invited me up for a vacation while I was working for the Tower Novelty Company. That was in 1893. I liked it so much that I came for four weeks and I stayed four months. When I finally got back to New York my job had been given to a new man and they wanted me to take a position that didn't pay half as good. So my mind was made for for me. I left New York and went to Canada for good. I started out peddling clothes, following the new railroad construction routes. Railroad construction in that part of Canada was nothing but trestles; one hill after another had to be crossed and they had to build trestles. I only carried men's wear. There were no women around in those

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days. The way I'd work it I used to load my trunks full of goods on the trains. It was all through friends. I'd have a baggage man or a conductor who was my friend and he would see to it that the trunk was dropped at the right place. Then I'd come along and sell it to the construction men. By 1894, when I was only twenty-two, I had enough money to open up a general store at Chelmsford, Ontario. But then, in 1898, I threw it up and came to New York and got married. She was a girl from my home town in Lithuania. Her relatives tried to get me to stay in New York. I even opened a store on Broadway in Brooklyn, but I couldn't stand the life. So dull, nothing to do all day long. I missed the country, the big snows, and the trips into the bush. City life wasn't for me. But up to the last minute my wife's relatives kept after her not to go to Canada. To hear them talk you'd think it was only outlaws and thieves lived there. Yes, Canada had a bad reputation then.

"When I brought my wife back to Canada with me, we went to Sudbury to live. It was just a little frontier town, about five, six hundred inhabitants, and two Jewish families besides us. And wasn't she crying! No electric lights. No gas. Only coal oil. Every day we had to make the lamps. She cried for two weeks straight. We had two nice rooms, but still she cried. So I said: 'Let me go out and start a business and I'll settle down in Sudbury.' So I went out for two weeks looking around for something. There was a fellow in town who owned a store, a Jew named Cohen. He was a free-thinker, always talking to people and never doing anything but talk, talk. He had asthma and went to the States, to New Jersey, to get cured. I spoke to his wife about the store, and she said she'd take three hundred dollars for it just as it was. 'Come on over to the lawyer,' I told her. There was only one lawyer in town and he signed the papers and the store was mine. 'Course, I never bothered to look in the store, and Monday when I took over I found the place cleaned out, not a thing in it. She had taken everything with her. I didn't have much money on me. I had given my wife three hundred dollars and had kept about three hundred and fifty dollars. That was what I had in my pocket. It was a fine place for a store though; two beautiful windows, two rooms downstairs and two up. Fifteen dollars a month rent. The owner of the place —a broker in Montreal—gave me a lease for ten years. 'Now,' I told my wife, 'we got a business.' Then I went out to see where I could buy some merchandise. I saw a fellow walking along and could tell by his sample case he was a salesman, so I said to him: 'I want to buy some confectionery.' 'What store is this?' he says. 'Cohen's,' I told him. 'I wouldn't sell you for cash even,' this salesman tells me. It seems that they never paid their bills either, those Cohens. So I said to him: 'Stand still for a minute. I want to have a good look at you. Some day you'll want my business and then I want to remember what you look like.'

"Then I met another fellow who traveled for a Toronto house. 'Hello, Weisman,' he says, 'I heard you got married. Congratulations!' I told him about the store. 'It's a darn good stand,' he agreed. 'Sure,' he says, 'we can get you stuff and we'll trust you. We know you, Abe. And another thing,' he says, 'we'll send the goods to you express pre-paid.' That's the way all the people are over there, friendly. Believe it or not, in thirty days I didn't owe a cent to anybody."

INDEED, that's the way it went always, friends everywhere. Hard luck, tough breaks, to be sure, but Canada, for Abe Weisman and his family, was swarming with friends, people who wanted to be helpful and kind. I had imagined something entirely different. To me, the pathos of being an immigrant, of being uprooted and remolded, seemed ridiculously foreign, even outrageous, when acted out in the unfamiliar setting of the Canadian bush. Some human adventures appall us just by their air of being too extreme, carrying its actor beyond the scope of our sympathy. The story that everyone told was inevitably the story we could all respond to; but the story one lone man told—that was another matter, almost by reflex we grew colder, suspicious of its teller.

The paradox was, however, that life in the Canadian woods was far less of an ordeal than life in the Bronx or Williamsburg. Abe Weisman, that impulsive, head-strong man, had rushed out to one of the last livable margins of civilized existence—and had discovered there a warmly hospitable community of fellow marginal beings. Concerned as I was with the unusual in Abe Weisman's

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story, I had overlooked the simple fact that the frontier has always been the grand and indiscriminate haven. Among such a ceaselessly pouring riot of nationalities and tongues, what did it signify if one spoke with a Yiddish accent rather than a Hungarian or a French or a Polish one? Among an ever-shifting, ever-augmenting world of *luftmenshen*—gold-hallucinated prospectors, high-binding salesmen, fly-by-night promoters—how could one distinguish the Jewish *luftmensh* from the Irish, Scotch, and French Canadian varieties of the breed? And what did it matter, anyway? In the free and wide-open arena of the Canadian frontier there was no social top and bottom, no rigid form and custom, no touchstone of convention by which the outlandish and strange could be measured and condemned. Out there, in the barrenness of a Hudson Bay post or before the denuded clapboard of some jerry-built frontier town, Abe Weisman was more at home than those Jews he had left behind to struggle with the relatively fixed realities of Second Avenue and Broadway.

"Everybody knew me in the North," Abe said, a bit sadly. "Why there wasn't an Indian in the whole region didn't call me Abe. Take the lumberjacks. After the spring drive was over and they got paid off they'd all head straight for town and who do you think they came to first? Me, of course. They used to walk straight into the store and buy a whole new outfit, strip down to the skin. They stunk like anything; hadn't taken a bath all winter. You should have seen how those lumberjacks lived in the woods. They had lean-to's made of logs with a thatch of boughs on top for a roof. In the middle of their camp was a big sand-pit where they did all their cooking and baking. They'd line up with their kits and ladle out the food and then eat it on long benches right out in the open in all kinds of weather. They worked about twelve hours of work a day. When spring came they'd all be in town for a good time. Poor fellows, they all used to say, 'I'm heading for Montreal,' but they never got farther than the nearest saloon in Sudbury. But they always bought a new outfit; always the same thing, blue serge suit, white shirt and a celluloid collar. The celluloid collar was very important. Then they'd say, 'Abe, here's my money. Take it and if I come around later and ask for it, don't give it to me.' Then they would always get drunk and come back and demand I give it back, raise hell all over the store because I wouldn't. Oh they all liked me, they were all my friends."

I remembered what his sons Charlie and Jess had told me about their life in Canada. If there was any minority in the Ontario of those days it was the English; saloons had a sign, "No dogs or Englishmen allowed." So, it appears, goes the track of empire. And being a Jewish child there meant fighting in the gang fights allied with the Protestants and Irish Catholics against the French Catholics, since, after the English, the French Canadians were most disliked, perhaps the closest to a downtrodden group.

"You can't trust a Frenchman," Abe told me. "They'll steal your eye-teeth. I always had to lock my store." But despite this one tinge of prejudice, life in Ontario seemed quite easygoing and pleasant. To Jess, the third son, being a Jew seemed to mean two vivid things: on Friday he would have to take the chicken to the slaughterer at the other end of the town, and on Passover he got a propitious holiday. "I always went down the back alleys and side streets; I didn't want my friends to see me, somehow. Then I had to watch him slit the chicken's neck, so I never could eat on Friday night. Then there was Passover. I remember it because it always came just at the time of the spring thaw. We kids used to go out then and pick up the whiskey bottles the men threw out the windows and sell them. And because we had a holiday, my brothers Charlie, Eckie, and I would be able to get the bottles before the other kids. There they'd be, near the old Polack boarding house where the railroad and mining workers boarded, sprouting out of the melting snow. We got one cent for a whiskey bottle, two for a small beer bottle and five for a quart bottle. Instead of going to the synagogue we'd hunt all day for bottles."

It was the sons, now living in New York, who had primed me on what to ask the old man. They liked and respected him; their voices rose with real fondness when they said, "You go and ask him. Ask him about Isaac Beaudry, about that rabbi, he'll know more than we do." So now I asked the old man about the rabbi. It obviously was a famous family story.

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"You say my son Charlie mentioned a rabbi," Abe said, "the one we had in Sudbury? Well, you got to understand what kind of a town Sudbury was in those days, just a stop on the railroad. But I always made it my business to get a rabbi. Not because I was especially religious, but the *goyim* had ministers and priests, so I figured we Jews should have a rabbi. But we always had trouble with our rabbis. Who wanted to come out to such a lonely place? One rabbi we had never wanted to start a synagogue, a congregation. He kept putting it off and every time I brought it up he thought of some new excuse. The reason? You see, as long as he collected money from each Jew in the town separately he could make more than if we paid him a salary all together. Then who knows how much he made on the side, slaughtering for Jews up and down the railroad. He traveled on a pass I got for him, so he went all over the province free. Finally, as the head of the Jews in Sudbury, I demanded he start a congregation, and that was when he left.

"So we were without a rabbi. I advertised for one in the Toronto papers, and we got an answer I'll never forget. I don't know what this fellow was—some kind of jail-bird. Oh, but he was clever, a regular actor. I'll tell you. One day he gets off the train with his wife and she's carrying all their belongings in a big red handkerchief. They didn't even have a valise. So he comes to me and says: 'Are you the Mr. Weisman who advertised for a rabbi in the Toronto papers?' I said I was. So he says that he's a rabbi. Well, I gave him the job. He was a good talker, smooth, with grand ways, you'd think he was born to it. I tell him that we would pay him one hundred dollars a month—a lot of money those days—and give him a house to live in.

"Well, we didn't have a house right then, so, for the time being, I told him he would have to stay with some Rumanian Jews who'd just come to town and lived on the outskirts. They were wild ones, drinking and fighting all the time, never worked. The first day he and his wife's out there he shows up at the store with a pious look on his face and he tells me: 'Mr. Weisman,' he says, 'I can't live with these people. They are doing bad things all the time. They have women there, prostitutes, and they're doing sinful things a rabbi can't believe his own eyes.' So I told him: 'Look somewhere else, rabbi, for at least a day or two.' After all, we didn't have a house for him, and that was that until we got one. Of course, I felt bad about it, this rabbi having to live with such lowlifes, with frisky French Ca..adian girls and drinking and fighting, but I advised him to keep his eyes shut and trust us to get him out of that place soon. We had a lot of wild customers up there in the North country, and who knows what these Rumanians were doing. Maybe running a whorehouse or something. I felt real bad for the rabbi.

"But in a day or two we had a house for him, hired it from a Frenchman and furnished it all nice. I bet he never lived in such a house before. Well, one day there was a *bris* and the rabbi performed everything fine. Oh, he was a clever actor, that young fellow. After the ceremony one of the men in the congregation asks me to step outside he's got something to tell me. 'Weisman,' he says, 'I got good news for you. That rabbi of yours is bootlegging.' And this man who tells me, he should know because he was one of the biggest bootleggers around that part of the country. I went back into the house and there was the rabbi. I was so mad I could have broken him in half. I motioned to him to come outside with me. All he had to do was look at me—in those days when I got angry I got red in the face and everybody could tell—and then he knew something was wrong. 'What's the matter?' he says when we got outside. 'I hear you're bootlegging,' I said to him. First he acts real high and mighty: What business is it of mine, he says, what he's doing? 'We don't pay you enough,' I ask him, 'you have to start bootlegging and humiliate us in front of the *goyim*. If you don't stop right away,' I told him, 'I'll kill you with my own hands.' So he promises he'll stop, and everything was all right for a while. But then one day another man comes around to the store and he tells me a terrible story about the rabbi. Seems there was a wild woman, a French Canadian girl, who had been living with those Rumanians just at the time when the rabbi was with them and didn't like what he saw there. This girl was so bad the police had run her out of town. Well, the rabbi had taken a trip up North a few weeks before and he must have met her.

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Anyway, this man tells me: 'That rabbi of yours has rented a room in town for this girl. He must be setting up to be a pimp.' When I heard this I was so angry I had to keep control of myself. I called for the rabbi. When I faced him with this new story he don't even seem to care. Again he says it's no business of the congregation what he does. Here was this poor girl and he gave her a home—that was all there was to it. I told him: 'You're our rabbi and not a pimp. Either you get rid of that girl or we'll get a new rabbi.' So he got rid of her.

"I GUESS you're wondering why we kept him after all this. What could we do? If we fired him the story would run all over the province how the Jewish rabbi was a pimp and a bootlegger. Better to keep quiet about it. Of course, I watched him like a hawk from there on. Didn't let him get away with a thing. But, as a matter of fact, we did get rid of him pretty soon after. I'll tell you how it happened. The big rabbi in Toronto was Rabbi Gordon. One day I get a letter from him that he's going to visit us: the synagogue in Toronto was starting a Talmud Torah and the rabbi was traveling all over to raise money from the Jews. The day he arrived he came right to my house, since I was the head of the Jewish community in Sudbury. So I says to Rabbi Gordon: 'Rabbi, can we have the honor of having you as our guest?' And the rabbi says to me: 'Mr. Weisman, I know that Mrs. Weisman keeps a real kosher house and I can eat all my meals at your house and never worry for a minute.' Oh, everybody knew how particular Mrs. Weisman was about keeping kosher. She even wrote away to Toronto every week to Cohen the butcher for her meat; she wouldn't eat the local *trefe*. So Rabbi Gordon stayed at my house. We called a meeting of the congregation and he gave a speech about the Talmud Torah and raised a lot of money. If you go to Toronto now you'll see my name up there in the synagogue, one of the original founders. After the rabbi's speech we introduced him to our rabbi, that bum, and Rabbi Gordon seemed to smell something about him even though I didn't mention his bootlegging and his French girl. Later that day Rabbi Gordon comes to me and says he wants to speak to the new rabbi. I don't know what went on between the two rabbis, but I guess Rabbi Gordon must have given him some kind of test or something. After it, he comes and tells me that the new rabbi is a fake, we should get rid of him. So we did. But even up to the last minute that young fellow was such a good actor you'd think he'd been a rabbi all his days. He was awful indignant, made a big speech, but then after everything he went away. We didn't hear of him for about six months and then one day I get a letter and inside there's a picture of the rabbi but now he's in cowboy clothes and he's sitting on a bronco, with chaps and a sombrero, and he says in it he's in Texas now and making big money herding cattle and that he's damn sorry he ever had anything to do with us Jews in Sudbury. So that was the end of that rabbi."

THIS story hit on something crucial. On a frontier everybody was everybody else's friend; but how could one really know a man? It was hard to say. If he talked "good," he was a rabbi. If he knew how to talk better, then he was a promoter and super-salesman of anything that could be bought and sold.

If he carried a pick and shovel, he was a prospector. And, ultimate of ultimates, if he could assay ore and stake a claim—talked knowingly of veins and outcroppings and lodes—why then he was a mining engineer. With such a rough-and-ready method of identification, with personalities and skills floating in the air and waiting to be donned by the first comer, frontier life could not help being one of continual upsets, surprises, reversals, and disappointments.

Especially the last. Abe Weisman admitted he was disappointed. So many fortunes found under his nose, gold and silver lodes discovered right and left, all around him, and here he was in Washington Heights without the fortune he should have made.

"I was a victim of my friends," Abe said. "They didn't mean no harm, but they gave me bad advice. I could give you a hundred stories to illustrate. Take this one. I was sitting in this hotel lobby up North during the Cobalt gold rush, and this man comes up and says he represents a firm in Toronto that wants to buy claims, any kind, so long as it's somewhere near the new find. I knew a

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lawyer from Sudbury who made a practice of sending out bums, they weren't even real prospectors, but they knew how to tie on a claim. Tie on a claim? That means when you make a strike, find a vein, you write out a map putting your find in the proper township. It has to be tied on to a town nearby. Well, anyway, these bums of his would stake claims wherever they could around a find; he had a filing cabinet full of them, no good at all, but there was always a sucker who'd buy them. So I got this fellow from Toronto $1,250 worth of those claims, and I split it with the lawyer fifty-fifty. At the time they were selling gold units on the Rouyn-Noranda find, so I thought I'd take the money and go buy some for my wife. On the way to the office I met an engineer I knew, Travers, and I asked him about these gold units. 'Don't touch them,' he tells me. 'I just came back from that country and I can tell you there's nothing to it. You'll be spending good money on dirt, no gold.' So I took his advice and didn't buy the gold units and in a few years the people who did were all rich. Of course he didn't mean me no harm; just wrong information.

Wrong information; bum steers; experts who didn't know anything and nobodies who showed up with a fortune in both hands—that was the sign under which all took place on the Ontario frontier. Abe Weisman spent a fortune trying to strike gold during the Porcupine rush—he had a chain of general stores by now, set up by hard work along the route of the railroad, deep in the woods—and he lost his chance for making a real killing by taking the most flighty of rumors seriously. "Sure, I got reports from the Hollinger boys," Abe explained, "and I had a whole camp of men working with me. Well, the Hollingers told me one day that the option had been thrown up by O'Brien because he couldn't find anything. That same day I left with our canoes and everything and worked down for about nine miles and started prospecting in another place, on the height of the land. Then we found out that Timmins had picked up the option for $350,000 cash. In two days more there we would have made our fortune.

"I spent about twenty thousand dollars in two years, scratching, scratching away in the hills. We found plenty of copper, but at that time copper had no market and we didn't even bother staking claims on it. Finally I got disgusted and went home. All I left there was Weisman Lake, it's still on the map. The government named it. As soon as they start to make some finds in the country, the government sends out geologists and engineers to fix up the maps. In that country there are lakes, one after the other. So they came to my property. They asked: 'Who is the owner of those properties?' So they named it Weisman Lake. They found a fellow at another lake; he was drunk. So they named it Whiskey Lake.

"You know who strikes it rich? The tenderfoot who hasn't got one idea about anything. He believes in the good book. He comes to town straight from the city and gets a license for ten dollars. At the office they give him the rules and regulations and they show him the rock, mother rock. Teach him what a vein looks like, tell him how to scrape off the moss and rock and test it. Then he's all ready. The old timers, they used to dig ten feet in the gravel and if they didn't hit anything they'd go somewhere's else.

"But when a tenderfoot comes around he keeps on digging and digging; he don't stop. That way he's bound to strike. Well, I wasted too much time up there. I went home. But they kept on finding gold; Kirkland Lake, Swastika, they were all big rushes. I was tired and I said I wouldn't go. When I left Porcupine it was 1911 and that was the last big rush I was in. It's all a gamble. Anyway, I had all the luck I could handle. I could take mud and the mud would turn into gold. What fortunes I had! I will tell you a story. A man walks into the store dressed in leather pants. . . ."

But I wasn't really listening any more. We had been in the narrow living room all afternoon, the old man talking, I taking notes and asking questions, and now through a haze of weariness I could hear Abe telling me of one deal after another, one business venture after another that came out beautifully.

It would always start with a stranger walking in out of the street and he would have a wonderful proposition to offer Abe. Sometimes Abe made a killing; other times he lost his grip somehow and the chance to

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strike it really rich slipped through his fingers. Was he making it up for me, for himself? I couldn't be sure, and it didn't matter. I simply sat there, nodding my head at Abe as he transacted his more spectacular deals, looking out the window into the areaway where a grimy, straggling, peculiarly metropolitan snow had begun falling.

It was late now and I had to leave. Abe had gone into his bedroom for some photographs he wanted me to see—pictures taken in Canada "in the old days." "I found them," Abe said, coming back into the room. He spread the photos on the table. They had the washed-out look old photos always have, that half-gray, primitive light you see in movies from the silent days. Here was the bleak square front of a clapboard house, the veins of the wood whitened by the weather, in the foreground a splayed porch and two empty black windows, and behind the house and all around it the waste space of Northern Ontario on an early spring day, still cold, but warm enough for the Indian kids who sat on the porch's edge to be going barefoot and for Abe's two helpers—this was his first general store, in Chelmsford—to be without mackinaws and hats, their shirt sleeves rolled. And here was a Hudson Bay post, farther north still, and two burly, unshaven French Canadians with their arms twined around a third man standing between them, wide grins for the camera, and a wreath of sub-zero fuming mist woven about all three of them like an ominous, concrete presence.

Abe pointed to the man prominent in the second photo. "You see him," he said. "Now who do you think he is?" I looked closely at the man at the center of the entwining arms: his face was fully fleshed and even in the grey dimness of the old photo you could sense the swarthy flush on the round of his cheek-bones; he was a stocky, big-chested man wearing a lumberjack's shirt, over that a thin sweater, and on his hands woolen half-mittens out of which thick, lumpy fingers protruded. He looked like a very tough man.

"It's you," I said. The old man was surprised. "You mean you really could tell?" "Of course. There's no mistaking it. That's you all right." "I've changed," Abe said, "I've changed a lot." Then, after a pause, "My troubles all started when I came back to New York; I did it for my family but I made a mistake. I should never have left Ontario. I had a good business there. Up there I was always healthy, but down here I lost my wife, my health, my appetite, everything."

The snow suddenly began to fall thicker, you could almost hear it. I called attention to it, hoping Abe would forget his troubles. "Call that snow," he said, contemptuously. "In Ontario we got real snow. Down here the snow's too wet, it ain't healthy for you. Up north it's beautiful, white and soft like sugar. It don't melt half way down the sky. But, you wait, you wait till I tell you the rest of my story and then you'll understand what real snow means. . . ."

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PROPHETS AND PROPHECY

Four Chapters from the "Mishneh Torah"

MAIMONIDES

JUDAISM's emphasis on the human nature and human qualities of the prophets was directed against the Christian-pagan notion of a man-God. Judaism insisted upon God's absoluteness, his incommensurability with man's reckoning. But there still remained for Jewish medieval thinkers the quite different problem posed by Islamic philosophy. The Islamic Aristotelians, the *Falasifas,* taught that prophecy is a natural completion of human nature which the gifted man can with certainty achieve through the exercise of his special gifts.

Maimonides accepted this teaching with a decisive reservation: he denied the certainty. Maimonides saw the same danger in Islamic philosophy as in the Christian-pagan belief—the confusion of man with God. The Christian-pagan "paradox" of a man-God and the Islamic "philosophy" of the calculable certainty of prophecy, are disclosed to be one and the same. The purpose of both is to resolve the mystery of God either through "paradox" or "reason." Maimonides preserves, and this is his innermost motive, the revelation of God as something which comes from the "beyond."

The following selections are slightly condensed from Maimonides' *Mishneh Torah,* Book I, Chapters VII-X. (They have been translated from the Hebrew by Jacob Sloan.) The *Mishneh Torah* was written in 1180, ten years before the better known *Guide to the Perplexed;* it is a gigantic codification of Jewish belief and ritual, in fourteen books.

The teaching on prophecy is central to Maimonides' thought. He gives evidence of this from the very first words of Chapter VII: *"miyesodei hadat"* (one of the basic principles). These first words echo the way in which Chapter I of the *Mishneh Torah* opens: *"yesod haye-sodot"* ("the basic principle of all basic principles" . . . is to know that there is a First Being).

The first six chapters of Book I, which precede the selections presented here, describe the fundamental truths of revelation; in these chapters, Maimonides tries to unite Aristotelian philosophy and metaphysics with Jewish revelation and law. Beginning with the seventh chapter of the Book, it is man as the bearer of revelation who is discussed. Revelation fulfills itself through men—unusual, exceptional men, but men nevertheless. The prophet is not the "son of God," nor co-natural with God; though not every gifted man can become a prophet, yet the prophet is man and only man. To understand revelation as far as the limits of reason allow, means: to understand prophecy out of the nature of man.—JACOB TAUBES

Chapter VII

ONE of the basic principles of religion is the knowledge that God causes men to prophesy and that the prophecy comes to rest only upon that man who is very wise and powerfully virtuous and who is never overcome by his Evil Inclination in any matter whatsoever; rather does that man overcome his Evil Inclination through the exercise of his intelligence, being the master of a broad and firm rationality.

2. The various prophets stand on different rungs of prophecy. As men vary in degrees of wisdom, so it is in prophecy; prophets vary in rank. The prophets all see their prophetic visions only in their dreams or in night visions or under the influence of a deep sleep

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during the day, as it is said, "I do make Myself known unto him in a vision. I do speak with him in a dream" (Num. 12:6). It is true of all the prophets that when they prophesy, their limbs shudder, they grow weak and their thoughts are confused; but through this effect, their minds are cleared to comprehend the prophetic vision. . . .

3. Those things which the prophet is told in his prophetic vision are told in allegory; at once the interpretation of the allegory is engraved upon his heart and he understands the meaning of the prophetic vision. . . . Some of the prophets tell both the allegory and its interpretation; others tell only the interpretation, and yet still others tell the allegory alone without its interpretation, as is the case with some of the prophecies of Ezekiel and Zechariah.

4. None of the prophets prophesies whenever he wishes; rather they concentrate and are happy and of good spirit, for "prophecy lodges not in the midst of sadness, nor in the midst of indolence, but only in the midst of joy." Therefore, the prophets have "Psaltery, tabret, pipe and harp" before them (I. Sam. 10:5). Thus they seek the prophecy.

5. Those who seek to prophesy are called Sons of the Prophets. Although they concentrate on prophecy, it is not certain that the prophetic spirit will rest upon them; it may or it may not.

6. Everything that we have said above refers to the prophecy of all the early and later prophets, with the exception of Moses, our master, and the master of all the prophets. What difference is there between the prophecy of Moses and that of the other prophets? The difference is that all the other prophets see their prophetic visions in dreams, while Moses our master sees them when he is awake and about, as it is said, "And when Moses went into the tent of meeting, that He might speak with him, then he heard the Voice speaking unto him" (Num. 7:89). All the other prophets receive their prophecies through the medium of an angel, hence they see what they see in allegory and riddle; Moses our master receives his prophecy through the medium of no angel, as it is said, "Mouth to mouth will I speak with him" (Num. 12:8), "The Lord spake unto Moses face to face" (Exod. 33:11); also, "And the similitude of the Lord doth he behold" (Num. 12:8); that is to say, there is no allegory here, but Moses sees the matter clearly, without benefit of riddle or allegory. . . . All the other prophets are fearful and terrified and melt with terror at sight of the prophetic vision; but it is otherwise with Moses our master. Of him the Writ says, "As a man speaketh unto his neighbor" (Exod. 33:11). Just as when a man is not terrified at his comrade's voice, so Moses our master possesses the powerful rationality to understand the words of the prophecy and be unshaken. None of the other prophets can prophesy whenever he wishes. It is otherwise with Moses our master. For Moses can prophesy whenever the Holy Spirit envelops him and the prophetic spirit rests upon him. . . . God promised him this gift, as it is said, "Go say unto them 'Return ye to your tents.' But as for thee stand thee here by me" (Deut. 5:27-28). From this you may learn that all the other prophets return to their tents when the prophetic spirit deserts them, for they are like the rest of mankind in respect to their bodily needs and cannot remain separated from their wives. But Moses our master did not return to his first tent; hence he separated from his wife and from all such bodily needs forever and his mind was fixed on the Everlasting Rock; the prophetic glory never deserted him, his face cast beams of light and he was sanctified like the angels.

7. At times the prophecy may come to a prophet for his own benefit alone, in order to enlarge his heart and broaden his mind, that he may know what he has not known before of the great matters of the prophecy; at times he may be sent to a foreign people or to the inhabitants of a city or kingdom to give them to understand the divine will, or to tell them what to do, or to deter them from the evil deeds that are in their hands. When the prophet is sent on this mission, he is given a sign or token that the people may know that God has truly sent him. But not every man who displays the sign or token may be believed to be a prophet. Only that man of whom we know from the beginning that he is fit for the prophetic gift by dint of his wisdom or works, by virtue of which he is superior to all his contemporaries, and that he follows the prophetic paths and that of seclusion—if afterwards that man displays a sign or token and says that God has sent him, it is a commandment to listen to him, as it

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is said, "Unto him ye shall listen" (Deut. 18:15). Yet it is possible that a man may display a sign or token and be no prophet, and that the sign may be a mystery. Nevertheless, it is a commandment to listen to him; seeing that he is a great man and a sage and fit to receive the prophetic gift, he is presumed to be a true prophet. . . .

Chapter VIII

ISRAEL did not believe in Moses our master because of the signs that he displayed to them, for he whose faith depends on signs bears a doubt in his heart that perhaps the sign has something of magic and witchcraft in it. All the signs that Moses displayed in the wilderness he displayed of necessity, not to give proofs of his prophetic spirit. . . . Why then did they have faith in him? Because of the stand at the foot of Mt. Sinai when "our eyes saw him and no strangers' eyes, our ears heard and no others' ears"—seeing and hearing the fire, the thunder, the lightning, and Moses approaching the darkness, and the Voice speaking to him, and hearing, "Moses, Moses, go tell them thus and thus." For it is said, "The Lord spoke with you face to face" (Deut. 5:4); and it is also said, "The Lord made not this covenant with our fathers only, [but with us, *even us,* who are all of us here alive this day]" (Deut. 5:3). Whence do we know that the stand at the foot of Mt. Sinai was the unquestioned proof of Moses' prophecy? Because it is said, "Lo I come unto thee in a thick cloud that the people may hear when I speak with thee, and may also believe in thee forever" (Exod. 19:9). From this we may learn that before this event the people did not have complete and lasting faith in Moses, but that their faith was hesitant and questioning.

2. Consequently, those to whom Moses was sent were the witnesses to the truth of his prophecy, and there was no need for him to display a sign to them, for they and he were witnesses to one and the same event. This case resembles that of two witnesses who see the same event at the same time, each of whom can testify that his fellow is telling the truth, and neither of whom needs to bring a proof to convince his fellows of that fact. So it was with Moses our master—all of Israel were witnesses to his prophetic gift after the stand at the foot of Mount Sinai, and there was no need for him to display another sign to them.

3. Therefore, if a prophet should arise and display great signs and tokens and seek to deny the prophetic gift of Moses our master, we are not to listen to him, knowing for certain that those signs he displays are witchcraft and magic; because the prophetic gift of Moses our master was not proven through signs, and we need not weigh his signs against those of this prophet; but we saw the sign with our own eyes and heard it with our own ears, like Moses himself. . . .

Chapter IX

IT IS a clear and explicit statement in the Torah that the Torah itself is a commandment destined to endure forever; there is no possibility of its change or diminution or addition; as it is said, "All this word which I command you that ye shall observe to do; Thou shalt not add to it, nor take away from it" (Deut. 13:1). . . . From this you may learn that a prophet is not permitted to make any innovations in the Torah. Therefore, if a man should arise, be he Israelite or Gentile, and display a sign or token and say that God has sent him to add a commandment or to diminish a commandment or to give any of the commandments an exposition which we have not received from Moses, or if he should say that the commandments which had been laid upon Israel were not destined to endure forever and through all the generations to come, but were rather commandments limited by time—indeed, he is a false prophet, for indeed, he has come to deny the prophetic gift of Moses; and he shall be killed by strangulation, because he presumes to speak in the name of God, who has not commanded him. . . .

3. Yet, if a prophet whom we know to be a true prophet should command us to transgress against any one of the commandments which are given in the Torah or any commandments, be they minor or major, for one occasion only, it is a commandment to listen to him. The tradition teaches us the same in the name of the sages of old: "If a prophet should say to you, 'Transgress against the words of the Torah,' as Elijah said at Mount Carmel, listen to him in every case—with the exception of idolatry." This is true, how-

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ever, only when the transgression is for one occasion only, as was true of Elijah, who made a burned offering at Mount Carmel, a place that was outside of the Temple in Jerusalem, when the Temple had been chosen as the sole place for such offerings, and he who made an offering outside of the Sanctuary was deemed worthy of excision. But, because Elijah was a true prophet, it was a commandment to listen to him, even in this case; for it was said, "Unto him shall ye hearken" (Deut. 18:15). Now, if any of the people at that time had demanded of Elijah, "How shall we abrogate the verse, 'Take heed to thyself that thou offer not thy offering in any place. . . .'?" (Deut. 12:13)—he would have said to them, "Only that person who habitually makes offerings outside of the Temple is deemed worthy of excision as Moses commanded; but I am making the offering today outside of the Temple according to the word of God, in order to discredit the prophets of Baal." It follows, then, that if a prophet commands the people to transgress against a commandment for one occasion, it is a commandment to listen to him. . . .

4. Also, if the prophet should abrogate any of the things that we have learned from tradition or if, in respect to any of the laws in the Torah, he should say that God has commanded him that the law is so and so and the rule is according to the interpretation of such and such a master—why, he is a false prophet and shall be strangled, despite the fact that he has displayed a sign; for he has come to deny the Torah in which it is said, "It is not in Heaven" (Deut. 30:12). But if it be only for one occasion, we must listen to him in everything.

5. This is true of all the other commandments; but in respect to idolatry, we do not listen to the prophet, even for only a single occasion, and though he displays great signs and tokens, and says that God commanded him that idolatry was to be practised only for this day or this hour—indeed, he speaks perversely against God.

Chapter X

THE prophet who arises and says to us that God has sent him need not display a sign resembling the signs displayed by Moses, Elijah, or Elisha—which involved changes in the course of nature. His sign would be if he were to say in advance things that were to happen and his words were to come true. . . . Therefore, when a man fit for prophecy comes in the embassy of God, neither to add to the Torah nor to diminish it, but to serve God through the commandments of the Torah, we do not say to him, "Divide the sea for us, or revive a corpse, or suchlike, and then we will believe you"; but we say to him, "If you are really a prophet, tell us things that are to be." If he does so, we wait to see whether his words will come true or not. If they err ever so slightly, it is known that he is a false prophet. But if all the things he says come true, then we shall consider him trustworthy.

3. But do not astrologers and magicians also say what is to be in the future? What difference, then, is there between the prophet and them? It is that in respect to the astrologers and magicians and suchlike, part of their words comes true, and part does not. . . . But as for the prophet—all of his words come true, as it is said, "Nothing of the word of the Lord shall fall to the earth" (II Kings 10:10); and it is also said, "The prophet that hath My word, let him speak My word faithfully. What hath chaff to do with the wheat, saith the Lord" (Jer. 23:28)—meaning that the words of the magicians and their dreams are like chaff in which a little wheat has mixed, but the word of God is like pure wheat, in which there is no chaff at all. . . . The prophet has come only to tell us things that are to be, as in respect to plenty or famine, war or peace and suchlike. He may even tell an individual about his personal affairs; as happened to Saul, who had suffered a loss and came to the prophet that he might tell him where the lost object was. It is for the prophet to tell these and suchlike matters, not to found a new religion, or add a commandment to the Torah, or diminish a commandment.

4. In respect to the calamities which the prophet speaks of, such as when he says that so and so will die, or that such and such a year will be a year of famine or war, and suchlike prophecies—if the prophet's words do not come to pass, that is no repudiation of his prophecy, and we are not to say, "Behold, this that he prophesied has not come to pass"—for the Holy One, blessed be He, who is long-suffering and abounding in

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kindness and grace, perhaps repented of the evil he was contemplating to inflict, or perhaps the people who were sinful did repentence and were forgiven, as in the case of the inhabitants of Nineveh, or perhaps the execution of the sentence was suspended, as in the case of Hezekiah. But if the prophet promises good fortune and says that such and such will come to pass, and it does not come to pass, it is known that he is a false prophet; for no good fortune that the Lord decrees is ever revoked, even if it is only granted conditionally. From this we learn that the prophet can be tested only in respect to prophecies of good fortune.

5. A prophet whom another, true prophet certifies is considered such, and there is no need to investigate any further; indeed, Moses our master certified Joshua and all of Israel had faith in Joshua before he displayed any sign. So it has happened in every generation; a prophet whose prophecy is known to be true and his words continually trustworthy, or one who is certified by another, true prophet and follows the prophetic path—concerning such a prophet it is forbidden to speculate or to doubt the truth of his prophecy; it is forbidden to test him excessively, and we must not continually be trying him; as it is said, "Ye shall not tempt the Lord, your God, as you tempted Him at Masseh" (Deut. 6:16), where the children of Israel said, "Is the Lord among us or not?" (Exod. 17:7). But since it is known that he is a prophet, they are to have faith and to know that God is in their midst and are not to question or to doubt him; as it is said, "And they shall know that there hath been a prophet among them" (Ezek. 2:5).

Blessed be the Compassionate One, our aid.

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ON THE HORIZON

CULTURE CONFERENCE AT THE WALDORF

The Artful Dove

WILLIAM BARRETT

"WAS the Conference really Communist-dominated?" a woman of my acquaintance asked. "I was not sure from the papers." We were talking about the Cultural and Scientific Conference for World Peace, held at the Hotel Waldorf-Astoria in New York the weekend of March 25-27. My questioner was a very intelligent professional woman and a convinced liberal, not actively engaged in politics and therefore unfamiliar with the political history of the persons who sponsored or spoke at the Conference. She had read all the newspapers on the Conference, but her doubt remained. And this doubt is typical: it expresses the attitude of many people of good will who are opposed to Communism when they recognize it, but who are willing to lean over backwards in order not to be taken in by what they fear might be propaganda from the Right. They prefer to risk being wrong with Stalin for fear of being right with Hearst, though they never put the alternatives to themselves so starkly—that would be too decisive. And it was this large indecisive audience of liberals that a propaganda spectacle like the Conference aimed to reach.

Of course, the tabloids had been whooping it up all week that the Commies were coming to the Waldorf. The *Daily News* and the *Mirror* had been snarling at the meeting as if it were actually to be an armed invasion, and the evening papers had been treating it with all the excitement of a late afternoon sports event. (There was something ironic in the popular press's paying this much attention to any group of intellectuals; obviously, it was not as intellectuals that they were suddenly so newsworthy.)

The State Department itself entered the scramble with a statement, printed on the first page of the New York *Times* on Thursday morning, denouncing the Conference as a "sounding board for Communist propaganda." But for Americans at this historical juncture, their press is suspect, and their State Department is a strangely discredited organization: American liberals would seemingly rather die than believe anything the latter says—even though this time the State Department made a telling point against the Conference that the Conference itself never answered: namely, that Russian interest in *this* cultural conference was odd in view of the fact that Russia had turned down every proposal hitherto for steady and continuous cultural exchange with the United States.

But the newspapers (including the respectable), in reporting the sessions, somehow managed to convey to many people the impression that the Conference did really rep-

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WILLIAM BARRETT here reports on the Cultural and Scientific Conference for World Peace which took place at New York's Waldorf-Astoria Hotel on the weekend of March 25, and about which there has been so much controversy. Mr. Barrett was born in New York City and educated at City College and Columbia University, from which he has a doctor's degree in philosophy. He is a member of the philosophy department at New York University, and is an associate editor of *Partisan Review*. His articles on literature and philosophy have appeared in various literary magazines.

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resent an outspoken exchange between different points of view. It did this by (inevitably as *news*papers) emphasizing certain speeches and questions (unexpected and exceptional) which embarrassed but did not upset the routine tenor of the Conference, and chiefly by failing to present any intellectual analysis of the program, issues, selection of speakers, and organized technique of discussion. So, despite the newspapers and even because of the newspapers, there were still reasons for many liberals who had not been at the meetings to be hazy, like the professional lady with whom I talked afterward, about this Conference's true nature.

One newspaper, to be sure, the New York *Herald Tribune*, did an excellent job on this occasion, and chiefly because it chose to follow the cues supplied by the rival organization to the Conference, Americans for Intellectual Freedom, directed by Dr. Sidney Hook. This group, with small personnel and scant resources, threw itself headlong into the battle, took rooms at the Waldorf from which it issued a steady stream of statements to the press, and topped off its activities for the week by staging a rival meeting on Saturday afternoon, at Freedom House on 40th Street, devoted largely to an indictment of the Russian suppression of all cultural liberties. Without the guidance of the AIF, the public opposition to the Conference would have descended to the level of the picket-lines in the street.

THE pickets were there bright and early on Friday morning. The great picket scare (it had been estimated that there would be 100,000 of them) never materialized. On Friday morning there were actually more cops around the Waldorf than there were pickets. The latter were on the whole a pretty sad lot; mostly from religious organizations, the American Legion, and local Ukrainian and Slovakian clubs, they occasionally sang hymns or knelt in prayer before the news cameras. Their behavior was hardly hysterical, as some of the delegates inside the Conference claimed, but they did give the impression of including some very unsavory types. As the Conference went on, the pickets became fewer, and the police, seeing that there was to be no violence, also became much less evident.

On Friday morning the Conference itself had not yet begun, but Dr. Harlow Shapley, its chairman and director of the Harvard College Observatories, had called a press meeting that morning, and it was the first opportunity to see both the foreign guests and Dr. Shapley himself in the flesh. In calling a press conference, Dr. Shapley got something he had not exactly bargained for. For American newspapermen, a press conference is precisely an occasion where one asks as embarrassing questions as one can. Dr. Shapley had intended to stage something else: a meeting which simply hurried through a series of prepared statements. The newsmen (who managed anyway to break through with some sharp questions) were not any more pleased by the proceedings than was Dr. Shapley, though for different reasons. "What kind of a news conference is this!" one veteran reporter remarked to me, as we were filing out. "One guy after another just reads his statement." This reporter had put his finger on the technique, decidedly not in the American pattern, that was to be used throughout the Conference to obviate any real debate.

It would be difficult from the brief glimpses on this public occasion to form any clear idea of so obviously complex a character as Dr. Shapley's. His face reminded one somehow of Henry Wallace. Perhaps the resemblance was read into it from their common political associations; but it did seem the same American type as Wallace's: more youthful than its years, very facile in showing emotion, with a kind of sincerity written all over it, but also capable at times of looming quite harried and even sick-looking. At the keynote session at Carnegie Hall Saturday morning, I stood directly in front of Dr. Shapley while the "Star-Spangled Banner" was being sung, and I have rarely seen a face express so much emotion: he looked very much on the verge of tears. When the anthem was finished, he stepped forward to tell the audience that they could not imagine how close to his heart were the feelings expressed in that song. Indeed, his warm and emotional voice seemed always to carry the tones of deep and convinced feeling. To complete the very American side of his character, Dr. Shapley is apt at folksy humor. His wit was not very brilliant, but it invariably drew laughter. This very great willingness of the audience to laugh at some

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poor jokes (including the very cheap one by Louis Untermeyer, that "Hook is a dirty four-letter word"—which the poet Robert Lowell, who was in the audience, sprang up to object to) was a sign of its complete identification with the speakers. From the opening gale of laughter at Dr. Shapley's first sally at the banquet on Friday evening, one knew that one was very distinctly *en famille*.

But with all his tremolo of deep and convinced feeling, Dr. Shapley's behavior over the weekend made clear how very complex a quality human sincerity can be—and we are reminded again of Henry Wallace. There is, for example, the business of his strange encounter with Sidney Hook, and the fact that he has not yet publicly retracted his statement that Dr. Hook lied in saying that he—Hook—had been invited by some members of the program committee to speak at one of the sessions, although Dr. Hook has documentary proof of the invitation.

But, for me, the most complicated and puzzling incident was Dr. Shapley's remark to Norman Cousins, when Mr. Cousins showed him the anti-Communist speech he intended making at the opening banquet: "This will ruin us, but we're for free speech, so go ahead." Certainly, if he really believed that the speech would "ruin us," Dr. Shapley was very generous in allowing Mr. Cousins to speak. But why, one wonders, should the speech "ruin us" if the Conference really represented, as Dr. Shapley on the following Monday said it did, all points of view? Perhaps Dr. Shapley's sincerity at this point may have been a little desperate, since, if he prevented the speech, Mr. Cousins, who is editor of the *Saturday Review of Literature*, might have gone on to print it—as he did anyway.

Besides Dr. Shapley, the two personalities who commanded most attention were the Russian delegates Messrs. Fadeyev and Shostakovich. Shostakovich was undoubtedly the star of the show, inevitably greeted with the loudest applause at every session at which he appeared. Shostakovich has the face of a boy, sensitive, unformed, and immature; the face, not of a happy boy, but one sickly, nervous, drab. When he had to speak, he hunched up his shoulders nervously, thrust his face forward, and spoke at, rather than into, the microphone in a high thin voice. "How unhappy he looks!" a good many people said to me, evidently seeing in his face the unhappy soul of a musical genius suffering under the heavy burden of Russian censorship. It may be some lack of pity in me, but I could see no signs in Shostakovich of a soul in torment; his record, after all, is that of an artist with a very pliant backbone. True, he did look unhappy, but who wouldn't look unhappy sitting through session after dreary session, most of it in a language one didn't understand? And there were moments when he seemed very relaxed and cheerful: at the news conference on Friday morning, while the attention of the conference was on other speakers, Shostakovich engaged in a very brisk and animated conversation with Fadeyev, smiling and gesturing. Of course, that was at the beginning of the Conference, when the trial of boredom had not yet set in.

If Shostakovich seemed sickly and introvert, the whip of the Soviet delegation, Fadeyev, on the other hand, looked the very picture of extrovert health. Vigorous, alert, and aggressive, he was obviously in his element in a big public show like this. Perhaps these public talents, rather than any literary ability, explain why Fadeyev is Secretary-General of the Union of Soviet Writers—in fact, the commissar of literature in the Soviet Union. I have not read any of Fadeyev's books, but if they are of a high imaginative order, then this bureaucrat-type is certainly a person of remarkable variety. One had the impression that among all the foreign delegates (most of whom seemed on the verge of falling asleep from boredom the greater part of the time), Fadeyev's eyes were intently following the ball at every moment: it was left to him to make the most aggressive speeches, and it was he who declared the ultimate and practical purpose of the Conference at the final rally on Sunday evening at Madison Square Garden, where he denounced the Atlantic Pact as "infamous."

But to get at the truth of the Conference one has to proceed beyond these reporter's observations to an intellectual dismemberment of the issues and procedures during this dull and windy weekend at the Waldorf.

The meeting was not a conference because no genuine intellectual debate took place,

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and there was no debate because matters were carefully arranged so that there should not be any. Speaker after speaker read his paper, with only a brief opportunity left for questions from the floor—and with time very carefully rationed to each questioner. Some of the questions, as mentioned, were embarrassing to the guests from the East, and the newspapers played them up, thereby creating the impression that full opportunity of expression had been given to dissenting opinions. It was on this mistaken impression that Dr. Harlow Shapley tried to cash in a day later by a public statement to the effect that the Conference had really represented different points of view. This was absolutely not the case. It is not hard to brush off any question, no matter how embarrassing, by a flat statement or a rhetorical flourish, provided the questioner has no opportunity to follow up his question. This opportunity was never given at any session I attended.

Various techniques of evasion were employed. One that was constantly used throughout the Conference was trotted out at the opening press conference on Friday morning. The Yugoslav delegate, Popovich, was asked what had happened to the Serbian writers Nikola Bartulovic and Sibe Milicic. (Both men had absolutely unblemished records of resistance to the Nazis, and both had been promptly shot when Tito came to power.) Popovich answered that the question was irrelevant to the purpose of the Conference, which was peace.

Sometimes the evasion was a simple rhetorical flourish, absolutely irrelevant to the question asked. In the panel session on literature, somebody asked from the floor what treatment was given to conscientious objectors to war in Soviet Russia. The Soviet writer P. A. Pavlenko volunteered a rather curious "answer": as for himself, he said, he had always been willing to fight for his country, he had joined the Red Army in the last war when he was fifty, and he would be willing to fight again when he was a hundred.

Sometimes the lie direct was used; and it worked because the limitation of time prevented the questioner from exposing it. The master of this technique was Fadeyev. At this same literary panel, he was asked about his blistering wholesale attack upon American culture at the Wroclaw Conference in August 1948: Did he believe in his attack? (He had been wooing American culture during the present Conference.) Fadeyev answered that in the speech at Wroclaw he had not attacked American culture but only those forces in America that were working against peace. The questioner rose to protest and to press his question, but was ruled out of order. The lie would have ended there, but it had to be protected by the chair a few minutes later when another person arose, held up the issue of *Pravda* in which Fadeyev's Wroclaw speech was printed, and asked to be permitted to translate it aloud to the audience. Permission was not granted: there was not enough time.

IF QUESTIONS—systematically answered and systematically pursued—were to be asked of anyone, that man was Shostakovich. At the panel on fine arts and music, a speech was read for Shostakovich by an interpreter, which sought to cover up last year's musical purge in Russia. Speaking of those works of his which had been condemned by edict of the Central Committee of the Communist party, Shostakovich said: "My works found response only among the narrow strata of sophisticated musicians, but failed to meet with approval among the broad masses of listeners."

Here was the conflict between the tastes of the elite and the mass, the cultural minority and majority, which is a pretty permanent part of the history of culture and which we are very familiar with here in America. But what has happened in Russia? The conflict was resolved by an edict of the Central Committee of the Communist party deciding that a certain minority (the sophisticated musicians), with standards and tastes different from the mass, is not to be permitted to exist or function. Elsewhere in his speech, Shostakovich, attacking "bourgeois formalism" and "reactionary modernism," declared the necessity of "social realism" in music. But what does "bourgeois formalism" mean as applied to music? What is the "social realism" of a Bach fugue or of Beethoven's *Opus 131*? What does it mean culturally to give the politician the right (and to assume he has the ability) to pronounce when the musician has become too formalistic or modernistic and to forbid his work publication and performance? The

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Conference did not deign to discuss such matters. Going further, Shostakovich attacked, in particular, the music of Stravinsky, Hindemith, and Schoenberg as decadent and reactionary. It may be asked: why wasn't Hindemith or Schoenberg or Stravinsky invited to the Conference to defend himself and debate these issues with Shostakovich?

Indeed, when we come to the question as to who was and who was not invited to the Conference, the whole facade of innocence crumbles. For the Conference, by carefully handpicking the participants, eschewed any possibility of a genuine intellectual exchange. Why, for example, was French literature represented—among those originally invited to the Conference—only by the poet Paul Eluard, a member of the French Communist party? Why were André Gide, André Malraux, or Jean-Paul Sartre not invited to represent another point of view besides that of Eluard? Why was English philosophy represented *only* by William Olaf Stapledon, a run-of-the-mill pedagogue of very little reputation, and not also by a man like Bertrand Russell? British literature was to have been represented by a fellow-traveling popular novelist, Louis Golding. No invitations were sent to British writers like T. S. Eliot, George Orwell, and others who would have been critical of the Soviet Union.

The representation of American literature was even more outrageously one-sided, in view of the fact that the meeting was held in the United States, where writers of other persuasions were easily available. In the panel session on writing and publishing, held Saturday afternoon in the Waldorf's Starlight Roof, the chief spokesmen for American literature were distinguished mainly for their lack of unfriendliness to Stalinism: Howard Fast, F. O. Matthiessen, and Richard O. Boyer. No invitations were sent to writers like John Dos Passos, Edmund Wilson, James T. Farrell—to name only a few of the dozen the Conference might have chosen. Norman Mailer, the young novelist, was invited on the basis of his support of Henry Wallace in the last election; but he surprised everybody by getting up to announce that he now considered Russia an example of "state capitalism," and doubted the effectiveness of any such meeting as the Conference in bringing about world peace. Up to this point Mailer had obviously been a great favorite of the audience, and there had been loud demands that he take the floor. His speech brought gasps of dismay, and a number of responses from the comrades, all trying to persuade him of his mistake and clearly not yet ready to give him up as lost from the fold. But Mailer's discordant speech lasted only two or three minutes and the session droned on, taking its tone and color from chief spokesmen Fast, Matthiessen, and Boyer. With the session organized this way, it was inevitable that Howard Fast should emerge as the dominant opposite number to the Russian delegate, Fadeyev, both commissars of literature.

OF COURSE, criticism was made of Russia during the Conference. But when one examines this "criticism," one finds that in its very nature and aim it had a subtle role of its own to play during this period of the Russian peace offensive. The keynote session on Saturday morning was opened by Dr. Harlow Shapley himself, whose speech was reported in the conservative New York *Sun* that afternoon under the streamer, "Shapley Arraigns Russia." Apparently the *Sun* wanted to lose no opportunity for anti-Communist propaganda, but its headline defeated its own end. What, in fact, was Shapley's arraignment of Russia? He said that in the East individual liberty was "sorely restricted," and he did refer—or rather said he *could* refer—to the labor camps of the East—though he qualified, "without much direct evidence." But the real point of his speech was to balance every criticism of Russia by an equal and opposite criticism of America, so that the total effect was precisely to equate the two systems. If both are equally sinners, then there are no grounds for preferring one system to the other, so that in the international conflict between them there is no reason to support any American attempt to check Russian aggression. This happens to be the prime argument of the ideal fellow-traveler in this period. Its goal: to return America to isolationism so that Russia can have a free hand in Europe and Asia.

The new soul-searching (Frederick Schuman did it even more emotionally than Dr. Shapley) takes the form of confessing sins on both sides, so that in the shuffle notice is lost of the fact that the West

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is democratic, however imperfect, while the East is a slave state. Suppose that in March 1939 the German-American Bund had commanded enough funds, enough propagandizing fellow-travelers, had captured Broadway and a good part of Hollywood, and that it had organized a Conference for Peace at the Waldorf, with the purpose of keeping the United States out of Europe while Hitler overran Poland and France. One can imagine fellow-traveling Nazis confessing sins on both sides, Germany and the United States—certainly democracy was no more perfect here in 1939—in order to fan isolationist spirit. But, given our historical hindsight, can we not say that all such neatly balanced criticism would have been a tremendous blind? Would one not have had to ask, more fundamentally, whether any kind of conference was possible or desirable with Hitler's emissaries—whether any kind of conference was possible or desirable with a totalitarian state? On the present occasion Stalin's emissaries gave absolutely no indication, from any speech or interview, that conference with them was really possible—except for people already on their side.

Yet this question, on which the whole possibility of the Conference turned, was never raised by any of the Americans who spoke officially at the various sessions. Indeed the behavior of the American speakers, in contrast with that of the Russians, was perhaps the salient fact about the whole affair. While speaker after speaker among the Americans assailed his government, the Russians never deviated a hair's breadth from the straight line that had been laid down for them. This fact, open to anyone who had eyes to see and ears to listen, told the whole story of two social systems already at war in this Conference for peace.

Mr. Ira Wolfert, war correspondent and novelist, spoke for several minutes to the effect that he had read conflicting reports about the Soviet Union and that he did not know what the real truth about Russia was since he had never been there. (From all indications, Mr. Wolfert was never in Nazi Germany either, but he did not have the same trouble in making up his mind that Hitler's was a totalitarian state.) Mr. Wolfert need not have been in Russia, he had only to use his reporter's eyes and ears at the Conference, and he could have learned about the nature of the Russian state from the behavior of its delegates. While Mr. Wolfert's Hollywood colleague, Clifford Odets, attacked American capitalism as a "mad beast," the Soviet delegates had no word of criticism for the slave-labor camps in Siberia, the total suppression of civil, political, and artistic liberties—no word touching that whole list of indictments of the Soviet system compiled from the experiences of innumerable people who, unlike Mr. Wolfert, were in the Soviet Union and suffered directly from its brutalities. What would Mr. Wolfert (or anyone of liberal persuasion) think of an American who spoke about the United States as uncritically as the Russians did of the Soviet Union? Would he not immediately distrust the integrity of the speaker?

To bind together all these points (which are really one point) one has to imagine what the analogue to this Conference would be: a conference held in Moscow in which the Russian delegates would vigorously attack the Soviet Union while the American delegates spoke in jingoist terms of the United States. Obviously such a conference could never be held, the very idea of it is fantastic. On the other hand, the Conference at the Waldorf *was* held, and that fact is a sign of the measureless distance between the two systems.

THE audience was the last, but by no means the least, touch in this staged spectacle. The composition of this audience seemed to vary in certain ways from session to session, but in the mass it had the same color as its speakers, and knew just when to applaud, hiss, or be silent: silent when criticism of Russia was made and bursting out in applause at any unfriendly reference to the United States.

The most "distinguished" audience was undoubtedly that present at the opening banquet on Friday evening in the Grand Ballroom. Eighteen hundred people attended, but we were told that the banquet was oversubscribed by three times that number. I do not know on what basis the seating was arranged, but there were all the indications of a sliding social scale, if the clothes of the women were in this case as reliable an indication as they usually are. The tables directly in front of the speakers' table were oc-

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cupied by the more expensively gowned women, while in the rear balconies one heard the humbler accents of the Bronx and Brooklyn. Roaming these balconies and listening to some of the talk, I had the impression that the Communist party now recruits its members and sympathizers largely from the lower middle class rather than from workers: dentists, shoe-salesmen, furriers, and small businessmen. At the session on writing and publishing there was a different audience, on the whole much younger, a good part of it apparently of college age; but it did not bear (any more than the diners at the banquet) the marks of proletarian origin, and a lot of the girls had the look of Sarah Lawrence or Bennington.

Much could have been learned of the human element behind the Conference if one had had access to the rank and file, the hidden people who made the wheels turn, tending the typewriters, telephones, and mimeograph machines; but these people were carefully kept out of sight and hearing of the inquisitive press. One could, however, mix with the audience, and moving among them one caught snatches of private conversation that were more honest about the Conference than the public speeches from the various rostra. Milling out with the crowd from one panel, I overhead one young woman refer to three pacifists who had raised questions from the floor as "Trotskyites"—the standard Communist word to designate any anti-Stalinist radical—and she went on to say: "*They* are always nagging *us* with their questions. You can't do it at one of *their* meetings. But they come around to *our* meetings and do it." Of course, in theory the young lady had no right to say "our meeting," since the Conference had been thrown open to anyone who paid three dollars and thus became a delegate. But this revealing use of pronouns tells more about the make-up of the Conference than all of Dr. Shapley's protestations to the contrary.

IT WAS the audience, in fact, that seemed to me the most depressing phenomenon of all. I don't know whether the Conference was, in its own terms, a success or failure. Some people, I think, were much too quick to call it a flop: the Luce publications, because Norman Cousins made a "ringing pro-American speech" on the opening night; and some leftist reporters, because a few embarrassing questions were asked that may not have been answered but were quickly smothered—as if the whole Conference had turned upon these fifteen minutes or so of questioning. One takes Stalinism lightly at great risk. One cannot afford to be too cheerful about a Conference that listed so many fellow-traveling sponsors; that read telegrams of good will from Nehru, Shaw, and Mann; that has virtually captured Broadway, and has a pretty firm toe-hold on the whole of that commercialized culture which, after all, is the dominant propaganda agency in American life. But, most of all, one can't be very cheerful about the fact that an audience like this is still, at this late date, capable of existing, with its stolid and enthusiastic capacity for boredom, deception, and self-deception.

The Conference leaves one with the melancholy impression that there is no American organization adequate in resources, energy, or direction to fighting Stalinist propaganda on a satisfactory intellectual level. The State Department hardly covered itself with glory in this situation: whatever reasons it may have had for denying visas to the delegates from Western Europe, the denial itself was not good propaganda for America, and the Conference made the most of it, Dr. Shapley himself firing the opening gun at the banquet by referring to the "State Department's Iron Curtain." For the few days that the Conference was front-page news, the press picked up the organization of Americans for Intellectual Freedom, but promptly forgot all about it as soon as the occasion was over. Even in its mortal struggle with Stalinism, America does not have much use for its intellectuals. This may prove its great mistake. For the one overwhelming fact that emerges from this Conference is that, despite all the ink spilled and the voices raised in the last fifteen years, despite the incontrovertible evidence amassed from the internal laws, decrees, and press of Russia itself, the myth of the Soviet Union still persists and flourishes. Each year it harvests its new crop of innocents (they were to be seen at the Waldorf) who in their turn harden into hatchet-men and commissars, while drowsy liberals go on asking whether conferences like this are "really Communist dominated."

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THE STUDY OF MAN

GOOD STOCKS AND LESSER BREEDS

The Immigrant in American Textbooks

EDWARD N. SAVETH

IT IS scarcely in the nature of an exposé to point out that American legislation on immigration in the past quarter-century, up to and including the recent displaced-persons act, has pandered to the myth of "Nordic superiority." The wellsprings of mind and spirit which feed this myth we know to be as deep as they are dubious—economic competition, social exclusiveness, anti-Semitism, suspicion of the stranger, brute selfishness—and it is difficult to measure accurately the role of any single factor in fixing the myth in the public and legislative mind. Yet complex events may be the result of the coming together of simple forces. A textbook, for instance, of the kind used in an elementary or high school—what could be more simple?

Textbooks have recently been attracting a remarkable share of national and international attention. At the Unesco General Conference in Paris in 1946, a program was adopted for the improvement of textbooks as aids in overcoming international misunderstanding. Last year, the United States National Commission for Unesco sponsored a study by I. James Quillen which reviewed the history of textbook analysis and its influence on the evolution of the curriculum in American schools, and which set forth a plan for an international revision of textbooks. On March 15, the American Council on Education published *Intergroup Relations in Teaching Materials,* a report of a special committee under the chairmanship of Dr. Howard E. Wilson, which scrutinized 266 textbooks used in American schools (but, alas, refrained from mentioning titles and authors), in addition to other teaching materials, for their attitudes toward minority groups.

Immigration comes up for classroom discussion in the teaching of American history, economics, and civics. This is a large subject, with much ground to cover; the classes are overcrowded; the teacher is busy. More often than educators care to admit, both teacher and student become, without resistance, prisoners of the textbook. And these textbooks, in the great majority, proclaim the innate superiority of the "racial stocks" of Northwest Europe. Racism may be forbidden doctrine in our large newspapers and magazines, on the radio and in the movies. But in the public school—prime mover of the nation's mind—it is still rather comfortably at home.

IN 1930, Bessie L. Pierce published a study of textbooks "most frequently found in the schools," called *Civic Attitudes in American School Textbooks.* She discovered that the prevailing attitudes toward immigrants were, to put it politely, uncivic, uncivil, and untrue.

Waddy Thompson's *The First Book in United States History* (1923) asserts: "Immigrants that came from the Northern countries

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EDWARD N. SAVETH here examines the treatment of American ethnic groups in history and social science textbooks—many in common use in American elementary and high schools—and finds some unhappy facts. Dr. Saveth is the author of *American Historians and European Immigrants,* recently published by Columbia University Press. He has taught history at New Mexico Highlands University and now works for the American Jewish Committee, dealing with problems in the field of education. He was born in 1915 and earned his doctorate at Columbia University. Next fall he will teach a course in American historical writing at the New School.

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of Europe are of a class that make good citizens, and as long as most of the immigrants were of that class all went well. But since the War of Secession most of the immigrants coming to this country have been from the lower classes of Eastern and Southeastern Europe, and they give much trouble. They are for the most part very ignorant, and, having been downtrodden in their homes, they have no respect for law or government. In fact, many of them would like to see the government of the United States destroyed." Many textbooks, in a dizzy flight into political propaganda, even took it upon themselves to urge the restriction of immigration from Southern and Eastern Europe.

THIS rough handling of the "new" immigrants was in sharp contrast to the gentle treatment of those from the North and West of Europe who came to the United States mainly before the Civil War. Miss Pierce finds the Puritans variously described as "a God-fearing and industrious people," gentle, kind, possessed of good will toward all men, "even toward the cruel king from whom they had fled, and toward the savages of the forests. They valued so highly the freedom to worship God in their own way that they would not refuse the same freedom to others." The French Huguenots were "a particularly desirable class of settlers," and added "a very great contribution to the making of our country." The Dutch are noted for their "usual firmness," enterprise, and industry, and the Scotch-Irish are characterized by the author of one popular textbook as "that sterling, hardy race of men," the best of pioneers, who gave us "some of the most distinguished names in our history." The industry of the early German settlers is also emphasized.

The Irish, who came to American shores in large numbers only in the 40's and 50's of the 19th century, fared not at all well at the hands of textbook writers. Susan P. Lee, in her *Advanced School History of the United States* (1896), found them "wicked and worthless immigrants" who "often sought a hiding place in the large cities where they swelled the ranks of idleness and vice. . . . Their ignorance of all things American, their inability to distinguish between one state and another, and their want of interest or sympathy for the traditions of the past made them undesirable neighbors to men who loved their own states with a passionate devotion." But after the end of the 19th century, textbook writers ceased to accord the Irish special treatment in order to consider immigrants more simply under two headings: "old immigrants" and "new immigrants."

Cornish and Hughes, in their *History of the United States* (1929), characterize the early immigrants as "Good types of immigrants" but found it necessary to head one section: "The new type of immigrant creates alarm." Burch and Patterson, in *American Social Problems* (1929), instruct their readers that Northern Europe is, with the exception of France and Ireland, "Protestant and, generally speaking, accustomed to freedom," while "the southern area is Catholic in religion, and, as yet, not altogether accustomed to free institutions."

Blough and McClure, in *Fundamentals of Citizenship* (1939), decided that a clear-cut tabular presentation would be the most pedagogically efficient manner in which to establish the relative virtues of the two waves of immigration. Their table follow:

IMMIGRANTS	EARLY OR "OLD"	LATER OR "NEW"
Birthplace	Northern and Northwestern Europe.	Southern and Southeastern Europe.
Education	Mostly well educated, intelligent.	Not well educated; frequently unable to read and write.
Occupation	Merchants, farmers, skilled workmen, professional men.	Unskilled laborers, few merchants.
Location in which they settled	Rural communities and small towns.	Cities in slum areas.
Purpose in coming	To establish a permanent home; to escape religious persecution or harsh government control.	To gather wealth; to escape training in the army; to return later to Europe.
Kinds of groups	Entire families.	Unmarried individuals; few families at first.
Number becoming citizens	Nearly all.	Small part.

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A final ironical accusation: discussing the new immigration from the South and East of Europe after 1880, Morehouse and Graham in their *American Problems* (1923) complain that one of its most deplorable aspects was the way in which it foisted race prejudice on the beautifully innocent native-born: "The races have brought over race antagonisms with them that introduce new discord into our national life."

IMMIGRANTS from the South and East of Europe do not lack for company as they run the gauntlet through the textbooks. A study of *The Treatment of the Negro in American History School Textbooks* by Marie E. Carpenter (1941) reveals attitudes toward the Negro, in books for Northern children, not markedly different from those L. D. Reddick* had found in Southern textbooks. The average history textbook of 1939 contends that the Negroes were generally well-satisfied as slaves, despite all the careful research which has revealed tremendous dissatisfaction on the part of the enslaved Negro population and a great number of slave revolts; they omit all mention of the half-million free Negroes in the United States before the Civil War; and, despite the mountain of research into the history of the Reconstruction period that proves the contrary, they continue to blame Reconstruction corruption upon the Negro's ignorance, unfitness to vote, and credulousness.

The Chinese, according to Timothy T. Lew ("China in American School Text-Books," *Special Supplement to Chinese Social and Political Science Review*, VI-VII, July 1923), are also treated as a "problem." "The Chinese were *willing* to live in cheap houses and amid poor surroundings," stated the late and venerable Charles A. Beard and co-author W. C. Bagley in *History of the American People* (1923). "This competition by workers who were *willing* to accept a lower standard of living was resented by American laborers." [My italics.]

This last statement by one of our foremost historians is a concession to that logic by which the evils of a young, expanding industrial capitalism are laid at the door of those who suffer from them. The immigrant, it would seem, came to America with the single-minded purpose of acquiring low wages, slums, poverty, corrupt urban political machines, class conflicts, and other embellishments of the "promised land." The Greeks and Syrians were reported to have very strong and morbid predispositions in this direction: M. K. Berry and S. B. Howe, in *Actual Democracy* (1923), told how, upon their arrival in America, "they go at once to the quarters of their fellow countrymen where congestion, disease, and poverty abound."

Thomas Nixon Carver and G. M. Adams, in *Our Economic Life* (1932), thought it obvious that the immigrant "does not require many of the comforts of life." Muzzey's popular *History of the American People* (1929), writes of the new immigrants as "content to work long hours for low wages, debasing the standards of the American laborer." The new immigrants, assert Beard and Bagley in *The History of the American People* (1928), "were willing to endure slums, long hours, and other conditions bad for their own health and morals and full of danger to the Americans about them." And if they were not willing to endure them?

TO FIND out where these strange notions come from, and their ultimate effect upon pupils reading these texts, would be an ambitious and long-term (and worthwhile) enterprise, in which a perceptive student might come up with some startling findings. But even a cursory glance at the *Zeitgeist* reveals some of the impelling factors at work.

It was during the 1920's and early 1930's that pseudo-learned books on the "race peril" by Madison Grant and Lothrop Stoddard, extolling the virtues of the "Nordic immigrants" from the North and West of Europe and assailing the "Alpines" and "Mediterraneans" from Central, Eastern, and Southern Europe, as inherently inferior, had their vogue. At this same time, it will be remembered, powerful pressure groups such as the American Legion and the Ku Klux Klan were pushing their own ideas as to how American history should be written and as to the relative worth of the constituent ethnic groups of the American population. C. F. Horne, author of *The Story of Our American People*, published in 1926 and sponsored by the American Legion and thirty-three other patriotic societies, including the Daughters of the American Revolution, wrote of the new immigrants as learning "little of their debt to our government" and finding "little cause to love it." He continued: "We thought we were Americanizing the anarchists who came

* "Racial Attitudes in American History Textbooks of the South," *Journal of Negro History*, XIX (July 1934), pages 225-65.

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here; we began to realize that they continued hating us."

While the Ku Klux Klan never actually sponsored a textbook (that at least was spared us), it had explicit and strong views on how American history should be taught: "When America became rich through commercial and industrial life . . . " we read in the "Educational Study for the Junior Citizen's Club of the Ku Klux Klan" (*Kourier Magazine,* January 1927), "it very naturally attracted to our shores a flood of immigration from the lands where poverty, tyranny, and ecclesiastical despotism hold sway. . . . This land of Liberty was to them a land of license. They were given the ballot almost before they got rid of the vermin they brought over in their steerage passage."

The role of sheer human ignorance, stupidity, and lethargy in promoting ethnic bias can hardly be overestimated. Textbook authors themselves are generally not scholars and are frequently unaware of the latest scholarly findings. It was as far back as 1909 that John Bates Clark, in his cogent introduction to the *Documentary History of American Industrial Society,* stated: "Americanizing goes on effectively when the economic conditions of this country are such as to ensure it. Conditions take precedence of racial qualities because the change in prevailing conditions is far greater than the changes of race. . . . It is an error to attribute the origin of the difficulty to the races represented by the immigrants or the conditions that prevail in the countries from which they come."

But many of the textbook writers of the following decades paid little or no attention to Clark, or to scholars of similar stature.

One can understand, then, how bias came to be "respectable" in America in the 1920's, and we know that its influence was spurred by depression and Hitler in the 30's. But in the 40's, after the war in which racist doctrines played such a crucial and disastrous role, one would expect a shift, especially in view of the striking change in broad public sentiment manifested among all classes of Americans in the postwar period. And one would certainly expect that in the larger metropolitan centers, like New York and Chicago, where a sizable part of the population is made up of later immigrants and their children, some concession might be made to their sensibilities—and to the truth.

By this time, too, such scholars in the field of immigration as Marcus L. Hansen, Carl Wittke, T. C. Blegen, Oscar Handlin, and G. M. Stephenson had demonstrated at length how primitive and uninformed the textbook writers were. The concept of the new immigrant as a purely "economic man" in contrast to the "idealism" of the older immigrants from the North and West of Europe was shattered by their findings, which pointed out that the economic factor has always been dominant in immigration, that the ebb and flow of the immigrant tide has always been considerably influenced by the trend of the American business cycle, that the Irish and German immigrants of the early 19th century were in their time also accused of being paupers, radicals, slum-dwellers, and of being difficult to Americanize, that the great mass of immigrants were not radical but conservative in outlook.

In order to obtain some idea of what the situation is today, this writer read through textbooks that have been approved for use in 1947 by the Board of Education of New York City for the day and evening high schools and vocational and trade schools of New York.

On the whole it must be said that the textbooks now in use in the New York schools are not quite so objectionable as those used countrywide a decade ago. Also these books devote less space to the subject of immigration in general than did the books published a decade or more ago—reflecting the fact that immigration, except in the past year or two, has not been a subject of vital public concern. However, the difference is of degree rather than of kind; by and large, this means only that the sharp edge of some of the more biting remarks has been removed. As far as the basic attitudes are concerned, there is no remarkable deviation from older patterns.

For example, James Truslow Adams and Charles G. Vannest, in *Record of America,* published in 1935 and used in schools in Brooklyn and the Bronx, reward immigrants from the North and West of Europe with the caption: "Our early immigrants come to find homes," while another caption goes on to say: "Our later immigrants come to find work." An unsuspecting outsider might be led to the belief that the "homes" first referred to were prefabricated.

Vannest and Adams believe that there are important "racial" differences between the people who came to the United States from the North and West of Europe and those who came

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from the South and East of Europe. Is it only a quibble to demand today that textbooks use the term "race" correctly and in keeping with modern anthropological findings? No competent anthropologist would grant for a moment what the authors of this book would have high school students learn: that "in Europe the population of each nation is largely of one race." There is further confusion in the matter of race in Ralph Volney Harlow's *Story of America* (1943), where the author refers to the Italians, Hungarians, and Poles as "racial groups."

Louis Ray Wells's *Industrial History of the United States*, though published in 1922, is still on the list of books approved for classroom use by New York's Board of Education. It justifies the movement towards the restriction of immigration in the following terms: "We have now ceased to measure greatness by mere numbers, and have begun to examine into the qualifications of those who would seek our hospitality. There has dawned upon many a tardy recognition of the necessity of conserving our human resources with a view to the founding of a better and abler type of man." Not a superman, surely. . . .

Canfield and Wilder's *The United States in the Making* portrays the new immigrants as "willing to work long hours for low wages," and makes the further assertion that immigrants "who settled in cities tended to concentrate in wretched tenements and shanties, thus creating new slum areas." Finally, they quote Chauncey M. Depew as saying: "The ranks of anarchy and riot number no Americans. The [immigrant] leaders boldly claim they came here not to enjoy the blessings of liberty, but to destroy our government and cut our throats, and divide our property." Technically, of course, they are merely quoting "a point of view." One might expect, however, that they give some indication that the "point of view" is a rather wraped one.

It is easy to point an indignant finger at a board of education and a board of superintendents for permitting use of these texts. There is also the publisher's responsibility for the subject matter of the text, and the factor of the climate of opinion (or state of apathy) in the general community. But beyond this, however, there is the simple fact that well-meaning authors of textbooks (to give them the benefit of the doubt) seem to shed their professional competence when dealing with immigration. The writings of Turner on the frontier and Beard on the economic interpretation of history are, for some reason, more familiar to the man who writes a textbook than the no less significant findings of Marcus L. Hansen in the field of immigration. While this situation remains, the textbook writer will inevitably tend to substitute easy prejudice for the sober truth.

The social psychologist Otto Klineberg has written that to change group prejudices in children, "the only hope is to reach them early, and to give [them] habits of favourable reactions to other races which will stay with them through life." Our schools even today, by tolerating the kind of history and social science textbooks they do, seem to be doing just the opposite. It is less important to fix the blame for this situation than to work out ways of improving it. Certainly there is no excuse for complacency about this "mis-education by insult," whereby American children are systematically exposed to a racist evaluation of—in so many cases—their own parents and grandparents.

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LETTERS FROM READERS

Self-Hatred or Self-Criticism?

To the Editor of Commentary:

I am grateful to Yehezkel Kaufman for having attempted, in his article "Anti-Semitic Stereotypes in Zionism" [published in the March Commentary], to find a solution to the disturbing problem of Jewish self-criticism—a problem that continues to preoccupy us in spite of the partial success of our national aspirations. But the solution that Mr. Kaufman proposes seems to me false.

The basis of his argument seems to be that Zionism, to justify itself and to accomplish its ends, has adopted the arguments of the anti-Semites. But if we take as our examples such men as Berdichevski, Frishman, and Gordon, (mentioned by Mr. Kaufman), or Nordau, Bialik, and Jabotinsky, and leave out such others as Weininger, Koestler, and Jean-Jacques Bernard, whose psychic traumatism has rendered them unfit to formulate sane judgments on themselves or on their people, it must be admitted that the self-criticism of the former—which Mr. Kaufman incorrectly regards as borrowing from anti-Semitism—is based upon a situation of *fact* which their love of Israel "passionalizes," and for which they *always* propose remedies; whereas the attitude of the anti-Semites is based *from the first* upon passion, which they are obliged because of social imperatives to rationalize—and they always reach a verdict of guilty. In the one case love of Israel seeks to find a remedy for Israel's misfortunes; in the other case, hatred delivers the victim to the hangman. Jewish self-criticism is essentially lucid and optimistic; anti-Semitism is a mythomania bathed in a satanism without hope.

The weakness of Mr. Kaufman's argument seems to me to reside in the criteria he sets up to discriminate between that Jewish self-criticism which gives strength to what it criticizes (Bialik) and that which is merely abusive. For him the distinction resides in the style, which is the most fluid, the most changeable, and the most imponderable of elements. If I were to imitate Mr. Kaufman's example in offering quotations from authors (Frishman, Gordon, etc.) out of context—a procedure very popular, incidentally, with anti-Semites—I could prove that even Bialik, whom he distinguishes from the rest on the basis of style, might also be condemned:

Base and evil of heart, the people turns the word of God to ridicule,
Spitting scorn and insult upon it.
The people is nothing but baseness.
It is full of villainy and venom,
Rotten and worthless from head to foot.
(Bialik: "Surely the People is Grass.")

But the voice of Bialik is not the voice of Goebbels. It is the voice of a father who sees his child accepting what Mr. Kaufman calls the "tragic accident" and thereby committing a "moral sin"; it is the voice of a father who wishes to save his child and not to destroy it. Israel's guilt begins at the moment when it submits to the destiny imposed upon it by history. Israel's guilt is obviously not that it has engaged in commerce and usury, that it has lived in the ghetto, that it has spoken Yiddish—Mr. Kaufman attributes too much naivety to those against whom he argues—but that it refused to cast off its chains in Herzl's time, and even, in part, in our own time.

As for Mr. Kaufman's conclusion—"Pride is the only true nourishment for redemption"—I cannot accept this, for the simple reason that I do not understand how one can be proud of a "tragic accident," of the injustices of history, of the abuses of fate. Only a revolt—even in powerlessness—against this "tragic accident," against these injustices, against these abuses, can give us the right to pride. Pride cannot be born of slavery, but only of the realization of this slavery and of revolt against it. In this sense the exceptional lucidity and courage of certain rare individual Jews have nothing in common with the hysterical divagations of a Hauser, a Gobineau, a Chamberlain, or a Drumont, but represent on the contrary the boldest expressions of a Jewish spirit that everything seemed to conspire to destroy forever. These were diagnoses that were not pleasant to formulate, but they have made possible the cure. Should one be proud of the disease or of the diagnosis? To ask this question is to answer it.

David Scheinert

Rixensart, Belgium

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To the Editor of Commentary:

Dr. Kaufman's article "Anti-Semitic Stereotypes in Zionism" plays the spotlight on a sore point in Zionist propaganda. For too long, the Zionists, in trying to sell their ideal for Palestine, have been negating the Galut, to the injury of the Jews who call the nation of their citizenship their home.

The danger of this was highlighted in an article by Rabbi Jack Cohen in the *Reconstructionist* a year ago. He reported from Palestine that the Israelis were saying: "American Jews ought to pack up and go to Israel because they have no future in America." This is the most dangerous way of promoting immigration to Israel. The efforts to encourage Americans to settle in Israel should be carried on from the positive standpoint of making known the virtues of life in the new Jewish state, not at the expense of American Jews.

Commentary again deserves commendation for boldly presenting refreshing points of view that are necessary to clarify thinking today.

Robert S. Gamsey
Editor

Intermountain Jewish News
Denver, Colorado

What Can Survive the Melting Pot?

[Note: In a letter to the editor published in the January 1949 Commentary, Alvin Johnson, commenting on Robert Pick's "A Refugee Looks at Anti-Semitism Here," suggested that anti-Semitism in America does not constitute a serious political danger, and that the exclusion of Jews from certain areas of American life (and the corresponding tendency of Jews to keep themselves apart) may be in some ways a blessing, since it tends to perpetuate within the Jewish group intellectual values which might be dissipated if Jews were accepted more readily in American "society." There followed the exchange of letters between Mr. Pick and Dr. Johnson which is published below.—Ed.]

Dear Dr. Johnson:

In my article I did try very hard, in tackling the problem of social segregation, to distinguish between the—mainly utilitarian—reaction of Jewish refugees to racial segregation in such areas as employment and education, and the sense of exclusion from "society," i.e., preferred social circles. What seems to have blurred the clear line I wanted to draw was the fact that, as you know, Jewish emancipation in Europe cannot be separated historically from the social acceptance granted to those 18th- and early 19th-century "court" Jews, bankers, and army contractors, who formed probably as foolish a group as their less excusable 20th-century counterparts. My thinking must have been more influenced than I thought by the notion of that "progress from above" which, at least in Jewish affairs, effected what progress there was in Central Europe. I wish I had admitted in my piece how strongly that concept still lives on in any Jew brought up in Continental Europe. I cannot but deplore that it made me appear, my assurance to the contrary notwithstanding, a special pleader for the handful of snobbish Continental Jews who crave to be admitted to American "society". . . .

Robert Pick

New York City

Dear Mr. Pick:

In writing to Commentary about your article, I did not intend to criticize your views, but to invoke further discussion. For the problem is one that would profit by a good deal of airing.

There has been much criticism, particularly from Jewish thinkers, of Zangwill's conception of the Melting Pot. The conception of persistent minority groups has been set up against it—a "pluralist" society. But in the furnace of American life most imported European ore does melt. Groups held together by religion, like the Mennonites, Dukhobors, French Canadians, and particularly the Jews, are refractory ore. But bit by bit they melt. The Rockefellers of today aren't even aware that the 18th-century Roggenfelders thought it a sin to marry out of their sect and a temptation of the Devil to understand English.

The Jews are perhaps the most refractory ore of all, but yet they do melt. Hardly a month passes without some young Gentile of my acquaintance marrying a Jewess, or some young Jew marrying a Gentile. Such marriages, the wise ones say, are seldom successful. That I think is sheer nonsense. Among my friends, Gentile and Jew, divorce is common. Of the hundred or more mixed marriages among my friends I can't recall one single divorce.

You may say, if this is true, there is a reason. To be sure. A mixed marriage is contracted over difficulties. The young pair have to override parental objections on both sides. Each realizes that the other makes a sacrifice which ought to be compensated for by especial devotion. Why shouldn't such marriages succeed?

Take a long look ahead. Can you believe that with the rise of the working classes, too hard-headed for anti-Semitic sentimentalism, Jewish ore will remain refractory enough to resist melting? I don't.

In a Western village I encountered a family of the name of Cowing. You will readily see

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the etymology. Cohen, Cowen, Cowin, Cowing. (Part of it you find in real estate abstracts.) The Cowings are good Methodists and fear for my soul, since I am living in New York "among so many atheists and Jews."

Keep apart; encourage discrimination against you, or the Melting Pot will get a lot of you, anyway. I'd hate it if it got you all. Judaism is a grand religion; Jewish culture is a grand culture. For the elect. But for Mike Cowing, able auto repair man, it is good that Etta Burns has no reservations on him except as to the wart over his left eye, which he will have to have taken off before she'll say yes.

ALVIN JOHNSON

The New School
New York City

DEAR DR. JOHNSON:

Your letter has given me much food for thought. In the beginning I hesitated to discuss problems about which I might be thought to know so little from first-hand experience. But I have been struck by the sense of apartness in a good number of Jewish second-generation Americans. Yet at the same time, by and large, I did not encounter among them the kind of religiosity that pervades such groups as the Mennonites and the Dukhobors. Quite often I was startled by the lack of Jewish, or even Biblical, knowledge among young Jews. If one does not believe in a persistent tribal instinct, and at the same time considers the evident fading out of ancestral memories of Jewish theocratic community life, the conspicuous sense of belonging together which most American Jews seem to have can be accounted for only by the feeling, or fear, of being discriminated against. I admit it is a vicious circle. A long book would have to be written to follow the course of this problem through the centuries.

You regard anti-Semitism in this country as a transitory phenomenon, bound to disappear with the gradual melting of the "Jewish ore" in the "furnace of American life." I agree as to the usual success of mixed marriages and its reason. I know many European Gentiles who followed their Jewish spouses into exile and loyally shared its hardships. Intermarriage was, in certain periods, rather frequent in Western and Central Europe—more so, I seem to notice, than even in present-day America. But I am afraid that it had little impact on anti-Semitism in general. In fact, the anti-Semitic half-Jew was a well-known type. Naturally, the offspring of mixed marriages tend toward the majority side. This, you may say, is as it should be.

And once all the Cohens have become Cowings anti-Semitism will no longer have an object. But you do not desire the disappearance of all the Cohens. You want Judaism and Jewish culture preserved. "For the elect." Can any culture survive without a reservoir? Might not some anonymous Cohen of today be one of tomorrow's "elect"?

ROBERT PICK

The Jewish Family

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

The time has come when it seems a little patronizing and beside the point for correspondents to give COMMENTARY a passing pat on the back. By now your magazine has become a cultural fact of the greatest importance, excellence, and stability. Whatever American culture survives these corrosive years will most certainly be strongly influenced if not dominated by the newly and remarkably expanding Jewish cultural energies. In view of this, I should think that your readers would view the opinions expressed by Mr. Alvin Johnson in his letter in the January issue with considerable awe. Mr. Johnson's letter is the first published recognition I have come across of many vital facts, the most important of which is contained in the sentence: "The Jewish baby has the great advantage of a family system focusing attention upon the child and approving and encouraging every advance it makes."

Although there are many isolated cases of a similar care for children in non-Jewish families, the result is very seldom cultural. More and more, American schools and family systems have been approaching the condition of a stock-farm, in which proper diet, sleep, fresh air, and healthy competitive sport comprise the entire significant regimen. . . .

One has only to observe the frank archaism and despair in the pages of the *Atlantic* to understand Mr. Johnson's point. I say that the Jewish community should recognize this change with awe because it is too great an advantage to be exploited carelessly or recklessly, and too obvious a fact not to be understood as such by everyone.

R. W. FLINT

Montreal, Canada

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BOOKS IN REVIEW

The Novelist as Elder Statesman

THE GOD-SEEKER. By SINCLAIR LEWIS. Random House. 422 pp. $3.50.

INTRUDER IN THE DUST. By WILLIAM FAULKNER. Random House. 247 pp. $3.00.

THE GRAND DESIGN. By JOHN DOS PASSOS. Houghton Mifflin. 440 pp. $3.50.

Reviewed by NATHAN GLICK

A QUALITY of programmatic earnestness, pessimistic in Don Passos, cocky in Lewis, rhetorical in Faulkner, distinguishes these novels from most of the earlier work of their authors. Formerly, they were content to build their fictional worlds out of detail and style, and to leave implicit in the tone and structure of the writing whatever larger judgment they wished to make. The denseness of *USA* or *Babbitt* or *Light in August* was the token of the writer's belief in his creation; and the energy with which he documented and sustained his conviction infected the reader and compelled him to suspend his disbelief in the exaggerated, disbalanced, but truly possessed worlds of those novels. Turning toward greater explicitness, each of these writers has relaxed his concern with internal structures, and these most recent novels suffer, in varying degrees, from undernourishment and overstatement.

Those who tried to extract Sinclair Lewis' views on Phoenix and Babbitt, Gopher Prairie and the Kennicotts from the innumerable instances of direct lampooning, mimicry, and denunciation—concluding that he was a small-town aesthete and atheist—were, we now see plainly, overlooking most of the internal evidence of those early novels. No one really at odds with his society could maintain such bumptious humor with it, relish such minute observations of it, or treat so ambiguously the rebels against it. Still, this knowledge of Lewis' fundamental allegiance to the middle-class America he was presumably satirizing, doesn't prevent anyone less smitten than Lewis is with Babbitt's or Dodsworth's essential virtues from richly enjoying the spectacle or from drawing his own moral. Because Gopher Prairie was undeniably a living social organism, *Main Street* contained more meanings and possibilities than even its creator suspected.

In *The God-Seeker,* there is no longer any friction between the critical intelligence and the philistine taste. The satirist has abandoned the field to his pious *alter ego.* Instead of working from the flesh, which alone can arouse his cannibal talents, Lewis has been prowling through the archives of the Minnesota Historical Society to discover "truly great men who have been forgotten by a generation which is playfully diverting itself with the newest importations in Marxian guilt and neo-orthodox-Freudian-Calvinist sense of sin." Strangely, he devotes an entire volume to the alleged consequences of sin in his hero. Aaron Gadd, a naive young Yankee, is induced by a revival meeting to join a Minnesota mission, where he (almost apologetically) loses his small share of religious dogma. But he remains secure in the knowledge that the real American religion is the religion of hard work and that the true dogma is common sense. It is not that Lewis has arrived at any principled agnosticism; he is simply bored with theology. Only dutiful submission to patriotic hackwork can account for the choice of subject or for the aimless frivolity of the theological discussions.

READING *The God-Seeker* in conjunction with William Faulkner's *Intruder in the Dust,* one is struck by the fact that Lewis opens and closes his hero's quest for religion with the smuggling of a fugitive slave. For both Faulkner and Lewis, the Negro has become the touchstone of conscience: the proof of the liberal Northerner's superior morality and the source of the Southerner's guilty resentment of Northern interference. *The God-Seeker* illustrates a Northern use of the Negro as a kind of test of the white

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man's readiness for salvation, a view which must be differentiated from the more prosaic belief in the full humanity of the Negro. Faulkner's novel, for all its verbally luxuriant patches of narrative and mesmeric evocations of atmosphere, is primarily a tract against the Northern white's attempt to legislate the Negro's freedom, not because Faulkner opposes that goal, but because "only we must do it and we alone without help or interference or even (thank you) advice."

Although most of his previous work developed the mythology (of the Southern way of life and the integral role of the Negro in that life) which is at the heart of the book's argument, Faulkner had not before this made any pronouncements of a directly political character. It was natural enough that his violent, tragic, and hopeless portrait of the South should have been interpreted as a deliberate rejection of its past and a frightening prophetic judgment upon its present and future. But the blood and passion that overflow the early novels and stories are, like Lewis' raucous mockery, evidence also of commitment and participation, the more intransigent because Faulkner had accepted the worst that could be said of the Southern tradition. It is not difficult to refute his present claims for the superior quality of Southern life with statistics on literacy, sharecropping, and violence, or with the testimony of Richard Wright's *Black Boy*. Having won our logical victory, however, we remain pretty much as helpless as before in the face of a totally unreasonable racial situation. We should be foolish if, in the certainty of our own virtue, we made no attempt to understand Faulkner's paradoxical attitude toward the Negro.

THIS attitude is revealed in the incongruities of *Intruder in the Dust:* a portrait of Lucas Beauchamp, the elderly Negro who is nearly lynched, as a dignified, dispassionate, coldly heroic individual, against the use of the vulgarity "Sambo" to designate the whole Negro people; a casual disclosure of comradeship between the white boy who tells the story and his young Negro confederate in graverobbing, against the emphasis on separateness in terms of "nigger food" and smell; an admission that ninety-nine per cent of Southern white men would be unwilling to go out of their way to defend an innocent Negro, against the appeal to the Negro for a united front against the North. Theories of blood and tribal status cling even to Faulkner's symbolic acts of solidarity with the Negro. The lordly self-possession of Lucas Beauchamp (who refuses to be a "nigger" and never means "mister" when he speaks to a white man) is traced to a white forebear, and at the same time implies his descent from an African king.

It is as if Faulkner were trying to formulate his feeling toward a special branch of his family, with which his parents have had some vague but rankling quarrel, but whose individual members he has come to like. His book *Go Down, Moses* is dedicated to "Mammy" and indeed in much of his fiction the mother image is a black woman. His black and white boys hunt, sleep, and eat together as brothers (or cousins) until the adult's racial pride seeps down and destroys their ease, as it complicates the white boy's feeling toward the Negro mother. A sense of his own complicity in this estrangement from one's earliest companions motivates Faulkner's attempt to project himself wholly into the Negro's mind and feeling. Whatever we may think of the tribal, superstitious elements in his statement of the racial situation, Faulkner's involved affection and respect for the Negro may indeed be a profounder source of fraternity than the Northerner's easy, and impersonal, liberalism.

LIKE Faulkner, John Dos Passos has written into his latest novel a polemic against federal interference. His theme is the corruption of will and morality that accompanies bigness, even when it takes the form of New Deal social reform; in this regard, there has been little change since his bitter treatment of the American army in *Three Soldiers*. When he wrote the first two volumes of the *USA* trilogy, Dos Passos believed that a communist revolution might release a native tradition of libertarianism. *The Big Money* and *The Adventures of A Young Man* recorded the progressive stages of his disbelief. But his perspective remained the same: an anarchist suspicion of the state, a syndicalist leaning toward direct action, a particularist distrust of generalizing. While most of his radical and liberal friends accepted the New Deal, Dos Passos read up on Thomas Jefferson and found the latter's closest living disciple to be Senator Taft. Still, he is more hostile to contemporary American society than most of his left-wing critics. He hates the city-machine culture, but most of all he is horrified by the way in which political language has lost

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connection with the facts of experience. We are entering the age, he warns, "when all the words turn traitor."

His hostility to big words and grand designs has led him to thin out his language and severely limit his field of reference. This language has never had philosophical qualities. Dos Passos' expository prose, aside from the travel writings, is awkward, reticent, and sentimentally careful about avoiding sentiment. The headlong pace and multitudinous incident of his narrative style in *Manhattan Transfer* and *USA* were partly the effect of the enormous tension he required to break loose from a native shyness of language. In *The Grand Design* that tension has slackened; where previously Dos Passos was compelled to run through his trilogy without breaking his speed, he now must stop often to catch his breath within a single novel. His style, however, cannot bear the strain of relaxation. Free of the relentless pounding of sense impressions, the reader is no longer ready to accept the sinking in the pit of the stomach—which Dos Passos catches so viscerally—as a substitute for feeling, or a generic disgust for moral realism. Perhaps Dos Passos has taken too literally the Mother Goose jingle which winds through *The Grand Design*. "A man of words and not of deeds is like a garden full of weeds" may hold for the politician, but not for the writer, whose words *are* deeds, that is, they have consequences in the mind and in history, and may outlast laws or crops.

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Glubb's Romantic Arab

THE STORY OF THE ARAB LEGION. By JOHN BAGOT GLUBB. London, Hodder and Stoughton. 371 pp. £1/5/—.

Reviewed by ROBERT WELTSCH

BRIGADIER GLUBB—Glubb Pasha, as he is called—is the frustrated Titus of our time. His Legion is a miniature army, but it is also the first "modern" Arab army of the technical age; it became famous not by its deeds in the Second World War, as the author wants us to believe, but because it placed its guns around Jerusalem on the day of the British evacuation and shelled the civilian population in an effort to conquer the Holy City or frighten its Jewish population away.

Neither historically nor analytically does Glubb's book add much to the many available studies of Arab life. It is, in fact, hardly more than a passionate plea on behalf of "the Arab soul." As a soldier, Glubb is convinced of the military ability of this "martial race," though he has to abandon the fiction cherished by many Englishmen (including Bevin) that the Arabs as a people rendered the Allied cause great service during the war. It is an odd dilemma: in order to extol his Legion, Glubb has to admit that the rest of the Arabs did not fight for the British—most of the Arabs were pro-Axis, and some of them fought for the Axis. When Glubb explains that "in every Middle East country except Transjordan the Allied commanders were obliged to retain combatant troops throughout the whole war in order to ensure stability and order," what else can this mean but that Arab loyalty could not be trusted?

Glubb, now the leader of Transjordan's military forces, pretends to abstain from political controversy. Nevertheless, he devotes a whole chapter to the refutation of Zionism, repeating the familiar arguments of Arab propaganda, invoking formal democracy, and comparing the Jews to the "Redskins" of America. But he overreaches himself when he conveniently regards Zionism as the only cause of Anglo-Arab fric-

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tion. As if there were no dissensions about "imperialism," about airfields in Iraq, about the Sudan and the Suez Canal! The whole chapter is rather an outburst than an argument. It is regrettable that this man is Abdullah's military adviser just at this moment, when a reasonable attitude towards Zionism could not only save much innocent blood, but give this ruler a unique chance to shape Arab destiny.

According to a declaration of the British Foreign Office, Glubb has to be regarded as a private man who took employment in a foreign country. Formally this may be correct, but nobody will really believe it. When he was in London in August, he certainly did not discuss Transjordanian interests only. The London weekly *Economist* put the matter in the right perspective by bluntly stating that "Glubb serves Britain by serving the Arabs."

Politically, the predominant British view sees the Arab world as a strategically indispensable part of the British sphere of influence. Britain therefore quite realistically courts Arab friendship as a principal aim of British policy. There is also, of course, the issue of oil. But the psychological phenomenon of the attraction which the Arab world exerts on individual Englishmen is a steed of a more romantic hue. Glubb's work belongs with a series of publications which can help us to understand the Arab myth as it exists in the minds of those British Orientalists who discover in the Arab world a fairy tale of courage and chivalry reminiscent of the great medieval myths of the Crusaders and knight adventurers.

This enthusiasm, sometimes tempered with irony, is bestowed especially upon the Arab of the desert, the "chivalrous, freedom-loving" Bedouin. The urbanized "Levantine" Arabs usually accept Western standards, at least theoretically; they had been integrated in the Ottoman system of administration, and many were educated at Western universities. Like assimilated Jews, they sometimes hold positions in the Western world; some appear as political representatives at international occasions, or as political writers (see the excellent—though partly controversial—books of George Antonius, Albert Hourani, and others) and are familiar figures to Westerners. But, having little in common with the Bedouins, they are not the special objects of British admiration. The rural Arab lives in a different world: he is either a fellah (settled peasant or tenant) or a nomad of the desert and the steppe. It is he who is the romantic type of our story. "The rural Arab has an extraordinary affinity with certain Englishmen," writes Glubb.

Kingsley Martin, writing in the *New Statesman and Nation* on why so many Englishmen find themselves so much at home in the Moslem world, suggests that the average Englishman has little understanding of the universalist aim of Christianity, which requires that one love all human beings in the same way and seek spiritual good at the expense of physical satisfaction. Islam, on the other hand, "preaches no impracticable, gentle benevolence to the whole human race; Moslems are ready to stand up for themselves; they regard their own faith as superior to other peoples'. Like the English, they are generous. Their hospitality is proverbial. They recognize a general duty of neighborly conduct. Their religion is intelligible. It recognizes, as the British think religion should, one God who expects prayers at stated intervals, who can be understood without a lot of metaphysics, who never asks for the impossible. It expects a man to do a day's work, to be a good sort, to make what he can when the going is good, and to retire when he no longer needs to work, taking, as he goes, such pleasures as he finds, always within the limits of moderation and common sense."

Kingsley Martin is perhaps being slightly ironical, too, but his irony contains a grain of truth. Glubb's book bears witness to it. He has no irony at all. What chivalry, what love of danger, what heroic culture and romantic life! The Arab of the desert is an unspoilt child of nature, his life much nearer than ours to the great epic romances of the past. "I have seen deeds of generosity worthy of fairy tales and acts of treachery of extraordinary baseness, unscrupulous men of violence and others so gentle that they could scarcely have lived in modern England." It is indeed like the Arabian Nights.

This attractive and romantic world, alas, vanishes under the impact of Western civilization. It is one of the paradoxes of Glubb's story that he himself helped to destroy the ancient way of life he so much admires. He started with the Desert Patrol, which was assigned the special task of putting an end to Bedouin raids and establishing security on Western standards in the desert. But if raids are prohibited, what remains of the Bedouin life? If the nomads are settled, where is the chivalry of the horsemen

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and camel-riders? If the nomadic way of life passes, the social structure and all its conceptions are shaken.

The most interesting feature of Glubb's book is his vivid description of this transformation, the great adventure of gradually extending Western influence to regions where habits of life have not changed since the days of the patriarchs of the Jewish Bible.

The great revolution started after World War I, when new means of communication (automobile and airplane) conquered the desert. The safety of the Bedouin tribes was challenged by the mechanized weapons which could reach them in their solitude. For centuries, these tribes had been free from any central government; they knew only the laws of the desert and their own customs, and had no need to care for the overlord who sat somewhere far away in legendary Constantinople. This feeling of independence was strengthened when Wilson's call for "self-determination" of all nations, big and small, penetrated even the desert. "Vague echoes of Allied promises of independence and self-determination encouraged among the tribes the idea that in the new era everybody would do just as he liked." The Bedouins, alas, were not the only ones who were misled by, or misinterpreted, the doctrine of self-determination.

The British mandatory administration in Iraq and Transjordan made the first attempt in history to control the Bedouins, and Glubb was one of the pioneers of this pacification. He won the Bedouins "by love," and so recruited a small force of loyal policemen from the tribes. This Desert Patrol slowly succeeded in establishing a sort of civic order. In 1932, the last raid occurred in Transjordan. It was a difficult work of education, creating a sense for administrative order and responsibility, fighting against epidemics, social misery, illiteracy, and other evils. Glubb may exaggerate the results of the endeavors of the Transjordan government, but if one keeps in mind what sort of world this was in 1918, there is no doubt that remarkable progress has been made towards modernization and, above all, public security.

On the other hand, the author's apparently intended climax to his story—namely, the military deeds of the Arab Legion in World War II—is not very convincing. During the war, the newly formed Legion had its first opportunity to stand a test, and according to Glubb it did. But, as we earlier suggested, the only thing that can safely be said in its favor is that it was better than the other Arab groups. The Legion took part in the drive through the desert in 1941 during the Rashid Ali revolt in Iraq, and later in the campaign against the Vichy French in Syria. The military facts, if stripped of the glorifying language of the bard, are rather modest; Glubb's exaggerations are sometimes almost comic.

It is a source of great regret to him that the Arab Legion was employed mainly as a garrison force. "Thereby one of the world's great martial races failed to regain the estimation to which its ancient virtues entitled it, but which centuries of political obscurity had caused to fade into oblivion." At another point he writes: "There is, indeed, yet one more quality in which the Arabs resemble the British. For their enemies always calculate, before war begins, that the British are degenerate and money-loving. But when the crisis comes, they cast off their lethargy and rise to heroism and sacrifice which throw into confusion the carefully calculated plans of their enemies. Being themselves of this disposition, the British should not make the mistake of underestimating the

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heroic qualities of the Arabs because they seem to be indifferent or venal in peace-time."

This was written before the Arab Legion entered the Palestine war against the Jews. The main problem now for King Abdullah and for Glubb—and events have made the task even harder since Glubb wrote his book—must be how to save what little is left of the prestige of the Legion and uphold the myth which Glubb has tried to create.

Why is this Night?

PASSOVER: ITS HISTORY AND TRADITIONS. By THEODOR HERZL GASTER. Henry Schuman. 102 pp. $2.50.

Reviewed by DAVID BAUMGARDT

DR. GASTER has provided for the general reader an extremely readable book on Passover, packed with information on practically all of its various aspects. He has made extensive use of anthropological references to related festivals and to parallel religious symbols and folklore in other faiths and ethnic groups. He summarizes the development of the ceremonies of the festival from ancient times through the middle ages, and, from the point of view of modern critical historiography, has elucidated the historically plausible gist of the Biblical story of the Jewish exodus from Egypt. There is also a description of the seder table and a general characterization of the Pesach Haggadah, along with a detailed report of the exotic Paschal Sacrifice at Mount Gerizim still observed in modern times by the small dying sect of the Samaritans in Nablus. Even a short chapter on the Biblical "Song of Songs" is added, as this—perhaps the profoundest and most passionate love poem in the whole literature of mankind—is, by tradition, "assigned reading" for the eighth day of Passover.

Finally, though somewhat abruptly and too briefly, the meaning of the festival is shown to have developed from crude and primitive rites celebrating springtime to a festival of social freedom commemorating the liberation of a particular people from a particular state of servitude until, in the end, Passover points to the idea of liberty itself, to a freedom which, in the Nietzschean phrase, does not ask any longer "free from what?" but only "free for what?"

As Jewish tradition often emphasizes, it is not because Israel was freed from the hands of the Egyptians that Israel became free; it is because Israel set its face toward Sinai, toward spiritual freedom *after* having gained its national independence. Even one of those writings of the Talmudic age which is generally held in lower esteem, the *Mechiltah,* stresses in its comment on Exodus 19:2 that the acceptance of the Torah—the ultimate goal of the delivery from Egypt—did not take place in the Land of Israel because then all the other nations of the earth would seem to have been excluded from recognizing the Divine Law; the Torah was given to Israel on Mount Sinai, in the desert, i.e., in an unclaimed part of the earth, so that every human being should and could accept the supreme law of life.

Dr. Gaster is very anxious to avoid the impression of being apologetic and of idealizing lower religious notions and primitive superstitions. He apparently wished to keep much closer to a mere report of the customs and rites. This attitude is scientifically quite comprehensible. But the more we see of it in modern Jewish theology and historiography, the less, I think, we should remain unaware of certain disadvantages necessarily connected with this kind of scientific restraint. It is true that this tendency to limit oneself to a report of factual knowledge is infinitely more desirable than the intolerably uncritical adaptation of ancient Jewish wisdom to the latest political or cultural catch-phrases. Yet I wonder whether others will not regret along with me that, on various points, Dr. Gaster did not break the bonds of his self-imposed restraint.

It is good that, in his chapter on the Haggadah, he acquaints us not only with the Western standard liturgy but also with the fire, the beauty, and the moving sadness of some Passover songs of the Mahzor Romania and of the Carpentras Jews. But take, on the other hand, his reference to the *kittel,* the *sargenes,* the white cloak worn by many Jewish masters of the house on Seder nights, on the Days of Atonement, on New Years, and on both the day of marriage and the day of burial. In Dr. Gaster's context, the use of the *kittel* seems to be hardly more than just another quaint religious custom. But should it not be worth mentioning that this bit of religious ceremony represents an unusually graphic and bold religious interference with the routine of daily life? Can there be any doubt that this tangible coupling of the personal to the religious climax of life must strike even rather unimaginative souls?

Or the rabbinical disquisitions about the exact number of the Egyptian plagues in the

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Haggadah! One may, of course, feel tempted to think at first glance that the rabbis who indulged in this calculating of higher and higher numbers of the plagues primarily wanted to display their perfect knowledge of Scripture as well as a somewhat questionable exegetical ingenuity. But if seen—as I think it should be—as a piece of superior, animated, homely, half humorous free play with numbers and verses, how spirited is this disquisition! What an immense and intense devotion to and familiarity with every letter of a sacred text!

Or the *Dayyenu,* the Litany of Wonders, in the Haggadah. Is it enough to say that this litany is "a cumulative poem reciting the successive benefits conferred by God upon Israel" and then, as is done only too often, shrug our shoulders about this tiresome, pedantic, and dry enumeration of beneficent acts, of each of which it is said "that it would have sufficed us?" To me this hymn—with its painstaking conscientiousness and its deeply naive overflow of gratitude—is almost equal to the great hymns of thanks in our Psalms.

How good would it be for our emotional and cultural recovery, if our age of escapism and short memory could be imbued with something of the devotion and loving concentration present in that great "Volksbuch," the Haggadah, as it lives there even in such commonly neglected parts as the disquisition on the plagues and the *Dayyenu!* And why should our scientific objectivity forbid us to try to recapture something of this spirit of the Passover rites for our time and to give more "subjective" meaning to the "objective" knowledge of our tradition? If these "subjective" interpretations are inadequate, history itself will do away with them. If they are, however, valuable, why refrain from them because of too narrow and too timid ideals of an unbiased interpretation of history?

It would be unjust if these comments were taken simply as a criticism of Dr. Gaster's book —which is very good indeed; they are intended primarily to widen the approaches to his subject.

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Cinematic Gloss on History

SHALOM MEANS PEACE. By ROBERT ST. JOHN. Doubleday. 335 pp. $2.95.

Reviewed by NATHAN GLAZER

MR. ST. JOHN, a journalist who has written books about Yugoslavia, here covers a few months in the spring and summer of 1948 in Palestine, while warfare and truces alternated. Mr. St. John was very impressed with the new Jewish state and its people and institutions, and writes about them enthusiastically, thoughtlessly, and somewhat inaccurately, in the way most journalists visiting foreign parts generally do. The women are all beautiful and nurse unspeakable mysteries, the children are blond and curly-haired, the men brave and bronzed and impassive, the Mediterranean "inscrutable," and so on: everything is in exasperatingly familiar categories, processed for "easy reading." There is so much reconstructed dialogue and romanticization, that one is at a loss as to how far to trust Mr. St. John even when he acts as a political reporter and gives his first-hand versions (through dialogues with people involved) of the "Altalena" incident, the Haifa refinery massacre, the reopening of the Haifa refinery, and other important events which are still controversial. Presumably Mr. St. John takes less liberty with political fact than with people and human emotions, and so even though all he says about the latter is obviously cosmeticized, we might take the former at face value: but when he says that the young American captain

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of the "Altalena" had no idea, even after he was loading up with munitions, that he had enlisted in a "dissident" organization which had some differences with the Israeli government—what are we to believe? Where do we draw the line between the romanticized picture of an American political innocent and straight political reporting?

And then there are the simple inaccuracies: Abdullah was not "the most hated of the Arab leaders," Jerusalem was not "less than 20 per cent Arab in normal times"; the Agudath Yisrael are described inaccurately as "religious mystics from Poland, Rumania, and Russia," who are "pacifists by belief and nature"; the Habimah theater is described as Tel Aviv's "great music hall," and we are told that the Jewish "church" believes this or that.

The value of such a book is therefore questionable: those who know something will know enough to distrust—or at any rate be sceptical about—Mr. St. John's reports of what they don't know; those who know nothing will discover that in Palestine, as in Yugoslavia, women are beautiful, men brave, the Mediterranean (or Adriatic) is inscrutable, etc. The main point of Mr. St. John's book, as of a good many books written by American foreign correspondents these days, seems to be to give a cinematic gloss to history.

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Church and State

JUDICIAL DOCTRINES OF RELIGIOUS RIGHTS IN AMERICA. By WILLIAM GEORGE TORPEY. University of North Carolina Press. 376 pp. $5.00.

SEPARATION OF CHURCH AND STATE IN THE UNITED STATES. By ALVIN W. JOHNSON and FRANK H. YOST. University of Minnesota Press. 279 pp. $4.50.

Reviewed by MILTON R. KONVITZ

THE attack by the Catholic bishops on the doctrine of the separation of church and state, as formulated recently by the US Supreme Court, should make these two excellent books welcome to persons concerned with the problem of clericalism. The thousands of cases summarized and analyzed are a demonstration of the over-reaching ambitions of churchmen for winning a maximum of state aid for religious teaching, institutions, creeds, and dogmas.

The books complement one another. While Torpey's book devotes considerable space to tax exemption of property dedicated to sectarian uses, religious rights in marriage and divorce, religious rights in judicial trials, and the powers of religious societies, the book by Johnson and Yost places an emphasis on Sunday legislation and on church-state relations in education (Bible reading in schools, dismissed and released time, allowing credit for religious instruction, free textbooks, and transportation to sectarian schools).

As an illustration of clericalism's tenacity, consider our experience with Sunday laws. The common law in England prohibited any form of worldly labor on Sunday, which was recognized frankly as a religious institution. After 1776 Sunday observance was enforced in the original states, and in early cases Sunday laws were upheld as the exercise of a right of Christian citizens to preserve public order and to promote the Christian Sabbath as a day of worship and meditation. Gradually, however,

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the ground upon which such laws were upheld shifted to the police power argument: Sunday laws are essential to the physical and moral well-being of society; to the preservation of health and the promotion of good morals—"periodical cessation from labor," said a court, "will tend to both." The justification of such laws was no longer the keeping of a day holy for religious observance, but the prohibition of labor on a day designated by the legislature. Thus a Georgia statute which forbade the operation of freight trains on Sundays was upheld by the US Supreme Court in 1896 as a civil regulation prescribing a rule of conduct, and not a religious statute. In 1914 the courts of Maryland allowed themselves to stretch the casuistry to almost the breaking point. Laws prohibiting baseball playing on Sunday were upheld on the ground that the noise and excitement may disturb the peace and quiet of the neighborhood. People then sought out secluded spots; but Baltimore officials passed an ordinance banning ball-playing even where no residents could be disturbed. The ordinance was upheld as a constitutional exercise of the "police power."

IN RECENT years the people of Wisconsin, California, Oregon, Arizona, and Wyoming have repealed such laws, ostensibly adopted in the interests of their physical and moral welfare. California and New Hampshire have adopted laws which require simply "one day of rest in seven"—the citizen may choose any day he likes for his day of rest.

Perhaps if the people of Israel were to possess the intimate knowledge of the American experience in church-state relationships that they could find in these books, they would reject the provisions in the Draft Constitution that declare that the Jewish Sabbath and Holy Days shall be days of rest and spiritual elevation "and shall be recognized as such in the laws of the country." This provision, and others of a similar character, may prove to be a Pandora's box; such laws bring strife and vexation; they plague the body politic and corrupt the organs of the spirit. But it is greatly to be doubted that the citizens of Israel will, with respect to this matter, seek to profit from American experience; for, as Professor Morris R. Cohen noted with his philosophic eye, "The human disinclination and inability to learn even from the most bitter experience is one of the outstanding facts of history."

Prophet of Modern Statism

FERDINAND LASSALLE. By DAVID FOOTMAN. Yale University Press. 251 pp. $3.50.

Reviewed by SAMUEL J. HURWITZ

FERDINAND LASSALLE, the son of a Jewish merchant, spent most of his thirty-nine years striving to obliterate this fact. He altered his name to conceal his Jewish origin and, though an only son, he refused to enter his father's profitable business. But Jews, only recently freed from the ghetto, were still barred from the Prussian state service, and Lassalle was unable to realize his ambition to become a university professor. His final choice of a career involved a sense of degradation which he never overcame; hating, as he said, Jews and journalists, he was condemned by birth and circumstances to be both.

Earlier, he had wanted to be an actor—characteristically, a "great actor"; then he decided that he was "predestined to play in life itself the part which [he] had wanted to play upon the stage." His role, unfortunately, had much of the burlesque about it. (George Meredith, in his novel which deals with some incidents in the life of Lassalle, indulgently called him a "tragic comedian.") Lassalle's final extravaganza underscores, in its caricature, his personal life and some of his political activities. Obsessed by reveries of knight-errantry, gallantry, and glory, he died in 1864 in a quixotic duel that he provoked over a girl whom he described as an "abandoned prostitute."

David Footman, an English writer of fiction and biography, obviously sees in Lassalle, who was "larger than life and rather more vivid," an ideal subject for his literary talents. This biography, based on easily available published material, and bearing the subtitle "The Romantic Revolutionary," possesses the virtue of not quite measuring up to the standards of a Hollywood scenario. Mr. Footman is never gross, albeit sometimes naive in his effort at delicacy, especially in reference to Lassalle's relations with Countess Hatzfeldt. Lassalle's *affaires* are handled in the best of taste; a Victorian might be shocked, but modern readers, who are assured by the author that there are "few of us who will not find in Ferdinand Lassalle some disconcerting echo of our inner selves," will find the tale hardly titillating.

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To HIS credit, the biographer does not confine himself to Lassalle's loves, and constantly stresses his political and intellectual activities. The trouble is that Mr. Footman's insights are superficial, and the inclusion of a page-and-a-half bibliographical note does not make it a work of scholarship. (Its publication by a university press is some cause for wonder.) True, the author has drawn upon the better known studies of Lassalle—but then the contents indicate that even more clearly than the bibliography.

Mr. Footman's work suffers from a failure to assess the significance of the man, his ideas, and his influence for his time and ours. Lassalle was undoubtedly a ludicrous, incongruous figure. But he was more than that. In the Germanies of his lifetime, Lassalle had no monopoly on restlessness, flagrant excesses, snobbery, egocentrism, ruthless ambition, and a willingness, not necessarily cynical, to sacrifice all principle to expediency. Indeed, he might be viewed more as a social type than an aberration. Was not Lassalle's generation typical of any society "on the make," of times of social uprootedness, when old standards seem rather irrelevant, and new ones have not yet crystallized? By neglecting this context, except in a formal and uncritical way, Mr. Footman misses the significance of Lassalle's personality.

Mr. Footman does not even raise the problem which Lassalle, the *national* socialist, posed almost a hundred years ago and which bedevils us today—that of the interrelationship of nationalism, socialism, and demogoguery in this age of mass literacy and universal suffrage. Karl Marx, who considered Lassalle both a foe and an upstart, grudgingly admitted that he was "an enemy of our enemies" and acknowledged the "immortal service" of the founder of the General German Workers Association in reviving the workers' movement after the failure of the revolution of 1848. Lassalle "was after all the only man they were afraid of in Germany," wrote Engels on learning of Lassalle's death, although he later acknowledged that "for us . . . he would have been a fairly certain enemy in the future." Both Marx and Lassalle agreed on the need of destroying the middle class. Differing, however, on the means to attain this end, they developed serious differences about the end as well.

LIKE the struggle, seemingly trivial in its origin, between the Bolsheviks and Mensheviks in Russia over what to many appeared to be innocent and unimportant questions of phraseology, the conflict between Marx and Lassalle was much more than personal and did not end with the death of the contestants. Was Lassalle, with his program of economic amelioration and state-supported cooperatives, his political machinations—such as his readiness to align socialists on the side of Bismarck and the Prussian state—a forerunner of the type of political figure which has been so destructive of liberal values and socialist aspirations? Lassalle, who could "see in the crown the natural bearer of social dictatorship," who held out the hope that the crown would "pursue a really revolutionary direction"; Lassalle, who boasted that he never heard a "No" addressed to him by his followers; Lassalle, who held that "we must weld the wills of all of us into a single hammer, and must place this hammer in the hands of a man in . . . [whom] . . . we have the necessary confidence so that he may be able with that hammer to strike! . . . With us there is not a trace of that malcontent spirit of Liberalism, of that malady of individual opinion. . . ." Shades of Hitler?

Despite Mr. Footman and his predecessors, a true understanding of Lassalle the man has not yet been achieved; but—and this is of infinitely greater importance—an understanding of Lassalle the political and historical figure, the herald and harbinger of the modern emphasis on the state (as contrasted with the liberals *and* with Marx), has not even been attempted.

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